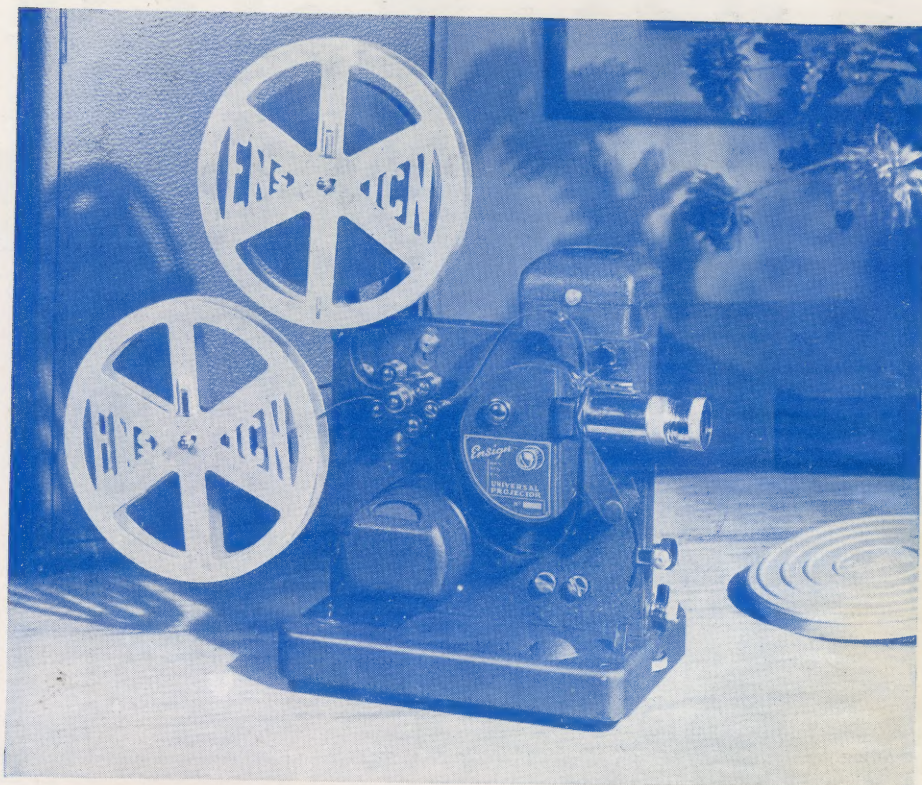


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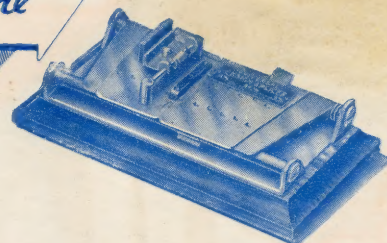
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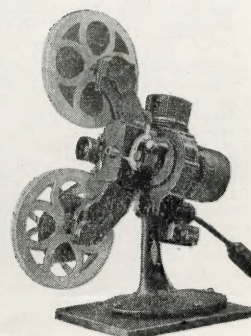
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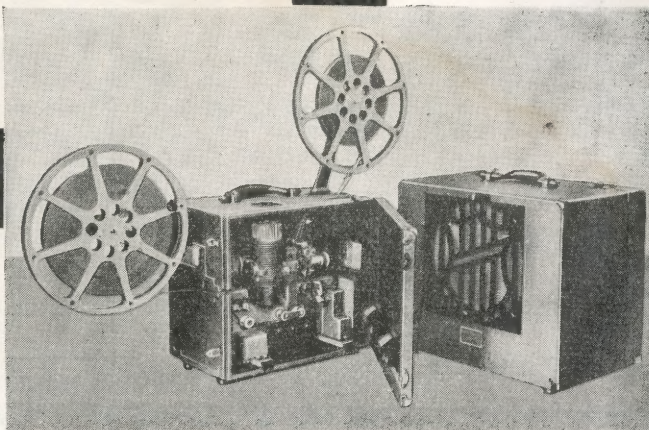
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AMATEUR CINE WORLD

Vol. VI February, 1940 No. 11

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Gordon S. Malthouse
Editor

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Crystal-Gazing in the Cinema

A Nation Revealed In Its Films

A NATION'S culture is measured by its arts; through literature, painting, music, the generations stand revealed. Film, the youngest of the arts, is the new universal language. It typifies the times more closely than the older ones, for it has a wider currency. We amateur movie-makers learn the grammar of it by studying its technique. Can we through this study learn something of the mentality both of the people who made them and the people who see them?

Assuredly something of the producer's personality is imprinted on every film. Although we have never seen them in the flesh, we have come through the medium of the film to look upon many of our readers as personal friends. We note that young John is growing up since his last picture and what a sturdy chap he is becoming. We have no need of sub-titles to explain that new arrivals are relations. We guess by her features that Miss X, who is introduced into a film for the first time, is Mrs. Y's sister. We follow their adventures with interest, and look forward to the next instalment, for they have become real people to us.

And Mr. Y. who makes the films . . . His letters accompanying them are often no more than a few polite words, but often we feel we know him almost as well as though he had told us his life's history. His personality flavours every production. Only Mr. Y. would have told the story in such and such a way. Gags of that kind could only spring from the fertile imagination of Mr. Z.

* * *

IS it too much to suggest that a nation is similarly revealed by its films? In these times the question has a certain significance. Normally few of us are interested in the sociology of the cinema. We have gone there to be entertained, a few of us to study the finer points of production. We have not looked upon it as unwitting propaganda or self-revelation. To-day, for the first time, many amateurs have come to regard technique not as an end in itself but as the grammar through which the producer presents a message he may not be conscious of conveying.

Many of our readers, we know, have found an added fascination in the cinema through this. We were, indeed, surprised by the volume of correspondence that came hot on the heels of the publication of our review of the recently published book, "The Film Answers Back."

This book seeks to interpret the realities of the political situation through the film. Some of our correspondents were sceptical that it could do so, some were frankly derisive. The majority wanted to learn more about the subject.

SO we have set the authors the difficult task of explaining a paradox of modern politics. If the view expounded in their book—that the film is an index to the national character and from it can be forecast future political events—is correct, how can such films as *Professor Mamlock*, a Russian production vilifying the Nazi regime, be reconciled with the march of events? On the one hand we are told that films typify the social conscience. On the other we are confronted with a situation that apparently tears that argument to shreds.

You may not agree with the authors' explanation. You may say that it is, easy enough to make a case in the light of subsequent happenings, that the true test of the validity or otherwise of the Robsons' views would have been the forecast of the Russo-German alliance. But whatever one's opinions on the matter, the article, "The Problem of Russia," in this issue, provides food for thought and throws a new light on this absorbing hobby of ours—a hobby which permits us to pioneer a new language, to add words to its dictionary and to formulate its grammar.

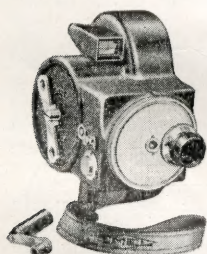
IT is hoped to give some news next month of the 1939 "Ten Best" films. It is improbable that the final judging will have been completed, because films for consideration for last year's competition will continue to arrive until the end of January ('appointments' having been made for them in December last). It seems fairly certain that some of last year's prize-winners will figure in the lists again this year and while it is a pleasure to welcome them again and to know that their hand has not lost its cunning, it is also good to find some new names in the lists—names of movie-makers who have consistently submitted their films for review for some time past. It has been a great satisfaction to note the improvement in each film: the rubbing down of rough edges, greater variety in camera angle, more precision in the editing.

Significantly enough, exposure is invariably satisfactory in all gauges. Three years ago one could not say this, but to-day is the day of the photo-electric exposure meter—and automatic processing will always take care of all but the grossest errors.

Readers have been very kind in loaning films to the Services. Here is another request which we are sure will not fall on deaf ears. The 88 'V' Social Club, London Fire Service, Brandlehow Road, Putney, S.E.15, would be grateful for the loan of films. Channon Wood, their hon. secretary (late hon. sec. of Ace Movies), promises that the utmost care would be taken of them. And the films really would be appreciated for, he writes, "we Auxiliary firemen work on an average 120 hours a week."

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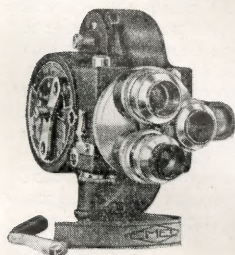


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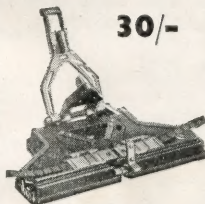
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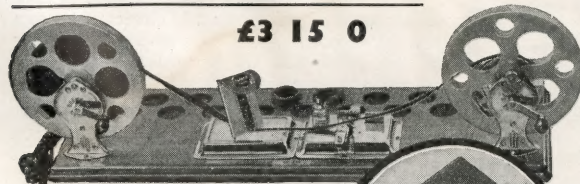
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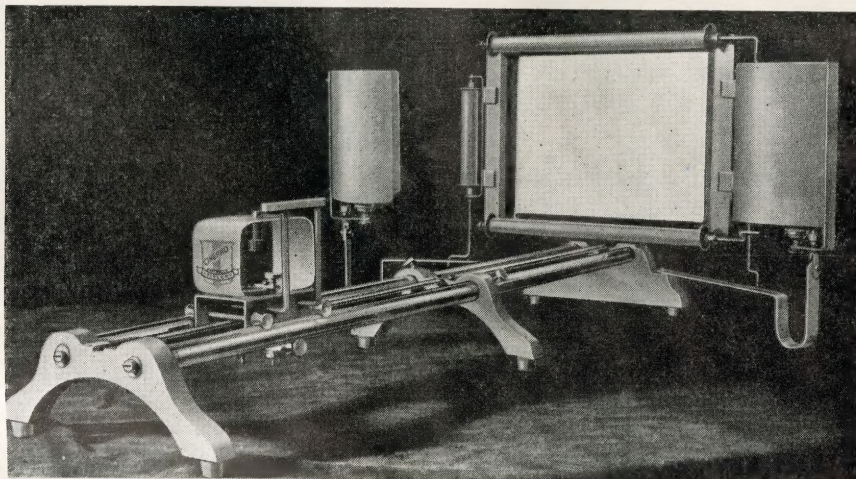


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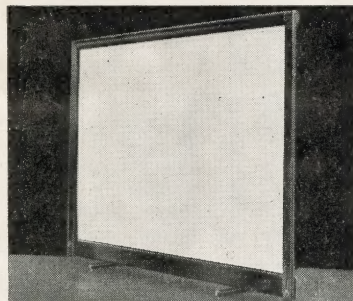
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SPECTACULAR COLOUR TITLES

A VERY popular method of making colour titles is the obvious one of using coloured letters on backgrounds of different colour. This method, however, has its drawbacks as the number of coloured letters and backgrounds available is necessarily limited. The method of colour titling described below has enormous scope and actually requires fewer accessories.

For some of the work a single picture camera is, unfortunately, essential, but much can be done without it. If a single picture camera is available, a reverse action is a great advantage and, fortunately, many cameras can be wound backwards by hand for a few frames once the spring has been allowed to run down to its limit.

In the method to be described both coloured backgrounds and colour filters are used and the colours produced are remarkable for their clarity and brilliance. What is perhaps even more important is that the colours can be made to change from one to another in a manner which is both satisfying and spectacular. The length of time taken by the colour transition is entirely under control and can be varied at will.

Providing that suitable apparatus is available, the procedure is simple. The apparatus consists of a single picture camera or, better still, a cartoon bench, an assortment of colour filters for the camera lens, some metal or felt letters and some papers of various colours. It is most convenient to have the filters mounted in a rotating carrier over the lens so that a new filter can be brought quickly into position.

Cheap Filters Can Be Used

One need not be deterred by the fact that good filters cost a lot of money; quite cheap filters—even unmounted gelatine ones costing but a few pence—can be used for the work. The writer has used coloured cellophane wrappers with great success. Gelatine filters of almost any colour can be obtained from most of the plate manufacturers at a cost of a few pence per square inch and cinematograph lenses, being small, seldom require a filter of more than a square inch to cover them.

A few examples of the effects that can be obtained with this apparatus may be of interest. Suppose that a title consisting of white felt letters on a black ground is set up. A red filter is in position over the lens and, say, 12 frames are taken; at the thirteenth frame a fade-out is arranged, its length being determined by the effect desired. The fading is best done by means of a logarithmic resistance operating on the lamps so that each successive frame receives a decrease in exposure.

If the fade-out ends at, say, the twenty-sixth frame the lens is capped and the film is wound back to the thirteenth frame. Filming is now started again in the forward direction with a blue filter over the lens, each frame from the thirteenth onwards receiving slightly more exposure—by means of the calibrated resistance—than the last until, when the 27th frame is reached

Remarkable effects secured by filters. Not only titles but a complete film of changing colour patterns could be produced in the manner described. This article will be concluded next month with constructional details.

By S. BOYLE

it has its full exposure with the blue filter. A run of another 12 frames can now be made with the blue filter in position, giving the full exposure to each frame.

The result of this procedure is a title consisting of a black ground on which the letters appear first as red, later changing to blue. Obviously the procedure can be repeated as many times as desired, using different filters. The times of transition are, of course, determined by the length of the mix; a comparatively slow mix lasting over 40 or more frames gives the most pleasing result.

It is quite easy to obtain titles in which every word is a different colour and in which each word changes

(Continued on next page)



Notice how aptly the figures are placed in relation to the design. In any other position their effect would be diminished.

(Continued from previous page)

colour, no two words being similar in colour at the same time. An example of a four word title in which each word changes colour once and no two words are the same colour at the same time is given in tabular form on this page. It should be mentioned that each word is dealt with separately; the first word is set up and filmed, the camera is wound back, the first word is removed and the second set up and this, in turn, is completely filmed and so on.

The effect on the screen is as follows:—The four words of the title, each a different colour, all fade in together and all reach maximum brilliance together. After a short time the first word, which is red, changes to blue and the transition is just complete when the second and fourth words, which were blue and yellow respectively, change to green and red. Immediately this change has taken place, the third word, originally green, changes to yellow.

Ample Scope for Ingenuity

This simple example has been chosen for illustration but obviously the method provides ample scope for ingenuity. In fact, there is always the danger that the very fascination of the work will encourage the production of titles so interesting and spectacular in themselves that they will seriously compete with the film proper.

Referring to the table, a little explanation is required. The numbers given under the heading, "Resistance Position," refer to the amount of resistance in series with the lamps; for the sake of brevity the resistance has been shown as having six calibrations. At No. 1 position the resistance is "all out" and the lamps are running on full voltage. The entire resistance is in circuit when position 6 is in use and the lamps are then running at minimum intensity.

Actually, the resistance is best calibrated in about 50 logarithmic steps and if one frame is exposed at each of these steps a colour mix will occupy about three

Spectacular

seconds; the full beauty of a mix is liable to be lost if it occupies a shorter time than this. A longer mix can be made by giving two exposures, or even three, at each setting of the resistance, but more than three exposures should not be given or jerkiness may be visible on the screen.

The amount of colour changing that can be done usually depends on the number of words in the title; if the title is a short one, it is not possible to do very much or the title will be on the screen for too long a time. The writer feels, however, that, when in colour, titles a little longer than black and white ones are permissible.

In teaching films each colour can be given a special significance, this significance being retained throughout the film. In the teaching of chemistry, for instance, hydrogen may be red, oxygen blue, nitrogen green and so on. The assistance thus given to the student has, in the writer's experience, proved to be of the utmost value.

Colour Aptly Used

When this system of colour coding is not in use, colour changes can be used to emphasise. For example, the title, "The Danger of Fire," could be presented by fading in normal size letters in, say, green for the words "The Danger of," holding these words for the required time and then fading them off as the word "Fire" fades in. This word would also be normal size and green, but would remain so for only about half a second after being fully faded in; it would then expand rapidly until it filled the screen, changing from green to bright red as it expanded.

FIRST WORD.			SECOND WORD.			THIRD WORD.			FOURTH WORD.		
Frame No.	Resistance Position.	Filter.	Frame No.	Resistance Position.	Filter.	Frame No.	Resistance Position.	Filter.	Frame No.	Resistance Position.	Filter.
1	6	Red	1	6	Blue	1	6	Green	1	6	Yellow
2	5	"	2	5	"	2	5	"	2	5	"
3	4	"	3	4	"	3	4	"	3	4	"
4	3	"	4	3	"	4	3	"	4	3	"
5	2	"	5	2	"	5	2	"	5	2	"
6	1	"	6	1	"	6	1	"	6	1	"
to 26	1	"	to 32	1	"	to 38	1	"	to 32	1	"
27	2	"	33	2	"	39	2	"	33	2	"
28	3	"	34	3	"	40	3	"	34	3	"
29	4	"	35	4	"	41	4	"	35	4	"
30	5	"	36	5	"	42	5	"	36	5	"
31	6	"	37	6	"	43	6	"	37	6	"
Wind back to 27	6	Blue	Wind back to 33	6	Green	Wind back to 39	6	Yellow	Wind back to 33	6	Red
28	5	"	34	5	"	40	5	"	34	5	"
29	4	"	35	4	"	41	4	"	35	4	"
30	3	"	36	3	"	42	3	"	36	3	"
31	2	"	37	2	"	43	2	"	37	2	"
32	1	"	38	1	"	44	1	"	38	1	"
to 50	1	"	to 50	1	"	to 50	1	"	to 50	1	"
Full Blue. fading in. Red. fading in. Transition Red to Blue.			Full Green. fading in. Blue. fading in. Transition Blue to Green.			Full Yellow. fading in. Green. fading in. Transition Green to Yellow.			Full Red. fading in. Yellow. fading in. Transition Yellow to Red.		

Colour Titles

It has already been inferred that the number of things that can be done with letters in titling is almost infinite. Quite a lot can be done by changing the background. A very simple and most effective background change can be effected by setting up the title letters on a sheet of glass and sliding coloured papers under the glass. This method can be used, of course, with a continuously running camera not fitted with reverse action.

Changing the Background

When a single picture camera with reverse action is used, as has been assumed for most of the work already described, it is convenient to change the background by the use of filters, using white paper only for the background. In this instance it is necessary to paint the letters by hand on to two punched celluloids so that both will engage with the peg bar on the easel. The lettering is white on one celluloid and black on the other and the letters, of course, occupy exactly the same position on each celluloid.

The celluloid with the white letters is used first. It is placed on the easel with a piece of black velvet underneath it and a sheet of plate glass on top of it, and a length of film is exposed just as in making an ordinary black and white title, the camera running continuously if desired.

Next, the celluloid with the white letters is removed from the easel and the celluloid with black letters takes its place; a piece of white paper is substituted for the black velvet. The camera lens is capped and the film is wound back to the point where the title started.

All that is necessary now is to expose a few frames with, say, a red filter over the lens, fade out, wind back and fade in with, say, a green filter in position. The effect on the screen is that of white letters on a ground which changes colour; a second exposure of the letters is prevented by the use of the celluloid with the black letters which are in exact register with the white ones first used.

Fading In and Out

It can be arranged so that the title letters fade in with the background colour or the background colour can be made to fade in first and reach its full colour before the title begins to fade in. The fade-out of the letters and background can also be made to synchronise or not as desired.

One point, although fairly obvious, should be mentioned. Filter factors will be found to be quite similar and many of the filters can be used without any exposure compensation, but if it is desired to obtain a greater depth of colour with a given filter, the lens will have to be stopped down all the time this filter is in use.

To make a colour mix with a red filter requiring $f/8$ and a blue one requiring $f/11$, the film would be started with the red filter in position and the lens at $f/8$



The comparatively low angle emphasizes the subject by isolating it from its surroundings.

and these conditions would be maintained until the end of the fade-out; the film would then be wound back to the beginning of the fade-out, the

blue filter would be put in position, the stop would be altered to $f/11$ and the fade-in for blue would be started. Another alteration of aperture may be necessary at the end of the blue fade-out.

At first sight it may seem strange that filters of widely different colour and depth should have similar factors. Indeed, to be correct, it is better to say that they have no factors as, usually, no increase in exposure is necessary. The position will be more readily understood when it is considered that the placing of a colour filter over the lens, when filming a white background, is really equivalent to filming a background the same colour as a filter without having a filter on the lens.

It is quite easy, and it is the best plan, to choose filters which do not require any exposure compensation, as much complication is thereby avoided. If very dark colours are avoided there can be no difficulty, as, providing that the correct exposure without a filter is first carefully determined, the colour of a white background filmed through a given filter will be the same as the filter used, except for slight differences due to the slightly imperfect rendering of colour by the film itself.

The first determination of correct exposure is best done by filming a coloured drawing or poster, and comparing the colours of the projected picture with the original. This is always the best course, as it takes into account the strength of light of the projector normally used.

(To be concluded next month)

NEW YEAR GREETINGS TO ALL

Despite difficulties due to prevailing conditions, we are looking forward with hope to the future. There will be no dropping off in the efficient service we have always tried to render, in fact our efforts in this direction will be even more fully concentrated. All the latest in new apparatus can be seen in our showrooms as well as a large selection of used cameras and projectors which are of course covered by our 6 months' guarantee. We look forward then to renewing old acquaintances and also to making new cine friends during 1940. Don't forget we've only one address — 202, HIGH HOLBORN.

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- 1½ in. f/3.5 Cooke for Paillard ... £7 10 0
- 1½ in. f/1.5 Meyer Plasmat ... £12 10 0
- 2 in. f/1.9 Dallmeyer ... £7 0 0
- 2 in. f/2.9 Dallmeyer ... £5 15 0
- 3 in. f/1.9 Dallmeyer ... £8 10 0
- 3½ in. f/3.5 Agfa Telephoto for Agfa Movex ... £6 10 0
- 3 in. f/4.5 Kodak Tele for Cine Kodak Special ... £7 10 0
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- 8 mm. **CINE NIZO**, f/2.5 Doppel lens, 4 speeds, back winding and triple viewfinders. As new ... £18 17 6
- 8 mm. ditto, but without back winding ... £15 10 0
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- 9.5 mm. **DITMAR**, f/1.8 Berthiot, 2 speeds. As new ... £12 12 0
- 9.5 mm. **DITMAR**, f/2.9 Cassar, 2 speeds. As new ... £9 9 0
- 9.5 mm. **DEKKO**, f/1.9 Dallmeyer, 3 speeds ... £8 17 6
- 9.5 mm. **DEKKO**, f/1.9 Ross (latest model), 3 speeds ... £3 17 6
- 9.5 mm. **DEKKO**, f/3.5 lens ... £18 10 0
- 9.5 mm. **CINE NIZO K**, f/2.9 Meyer Trioplan, 100 ft. spool loading, 4 speeds. As new ... £18 10 0
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- 9.5 mm. **PATHE H**, f/3.5 lens ... £3 17 6
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- 16 mm. **SIEMENS Model B**, f/2.8 Glaukar, 3 speeds ... £17 10 0
- 16 mm. **KODAK B**, f/6.5 lens ... £1 15 0
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- 16 mm. **ENSIGN KINECAM**, f/2.8 Cinar, 3 speeds ... £5 10 0
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- 16 mm. **DITMAR**, f/1.8 Berthiot, 2 speeds ... £16 10 0
- 16 mm. **BELL & HOWELL FILMO 70D**, f/1.5 speed, 3 lens turret head, 7 speeds ... £35 0 0
- 16 mm. **BELL & HOWELL FILMO 75**, f/1.5 Cooke ... £18 0 0

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THE HOME CINE SHOW

In previous issues we have described the mechanism of the projector, and its operation, including such matters as framing and focussing. Here we consider the technical aspect of the film show as a whole, the success of which is shown to depend on

PLANNED PROJECTION

IN planning your projection outfit it is necessary to remember that you have to "live" with it, and that whoever looks after the household may have something to say if you leave it about when it is not in use. If in the interests of tidiness you always pack your outfit away when you have finished showing one of your films, you may often consider it is too much trouble to bring it out when you are asked to do so.

The popularity of wireless is to some extent due to the fact that when you want to hear it you just cross the room and turn a switch. To-day they are trying to eliminate even the necessity to get up from your chair. One of the reasons why the cinema became so important a branch of popular entertainment is the fact that it was always available when required, with no trouble associated with the booking of seats, or long waiting in queues. (We know there *are* cinema queues, but they came later).

A Tip from the Radio Manufacturer

Because the radio and the radio-gram remain always in the lounge or living room they have graduated from the first open "lash-up" with its protruding valves and sprouting wires, to something which, in most cases, is unobtrusive and fits in with the ordinary furniture of the room. Take a tip from the radio manufacturer and create something of the kind for your projector.

The simplest solution of the problem is an ordinary dinner waggon on rubber-tyred wheels. When it is not normally in use the projector may either be covered or put on the lower shelf, together with the resistance and other paraphernalia and then discreetly shrouded from public gaze. Better still, equip your waggon with plywood sides and a door or pair of doors at the right so that the whole thing forms a cabinet. Such firms as Ensign, Ltd., produce cabinets on these lines specially designed and constructed for projection purposes.

A Useful Refinement

A refinement is to mount the extension cable, which goes to the supply point on your house electric circuit, on a drum supported inside the cabinet, the cable passing through a small hole in the cabinet and the spindle of the drum fitted with a small removable crank. The outer end of the cable has the necessary plug to connect to your supply. The inner end of the cable is permanently connected to a socket in the side of the drum, and this in turn matches a plug on the end of a short lead connected direct to the projector.

When you want to set up the instrument you merely pull out the cable to the required length, plug into your supply, and then plug the projector lead into the drum, and carry on with the projection. When you have

finished, disconnect the leads and wind up the cable rapidly with the aid of the crank.

Other devices of this kind will occur to you, and anything which avoids trouble in setting up will augur well for the future of your cinematography, because your most insistent enemy is "It's too much trouble." You may say, "I am too keen to let such things affect me," but you must bear in mind that when you are inclined to show films is often at a time when you are in a restful, "sit by the fire" mood, and the pull of the armchair is strong. A few occasions like that and you will start to weigh the trouble against the attraction, and your film projection will start to be neglected.

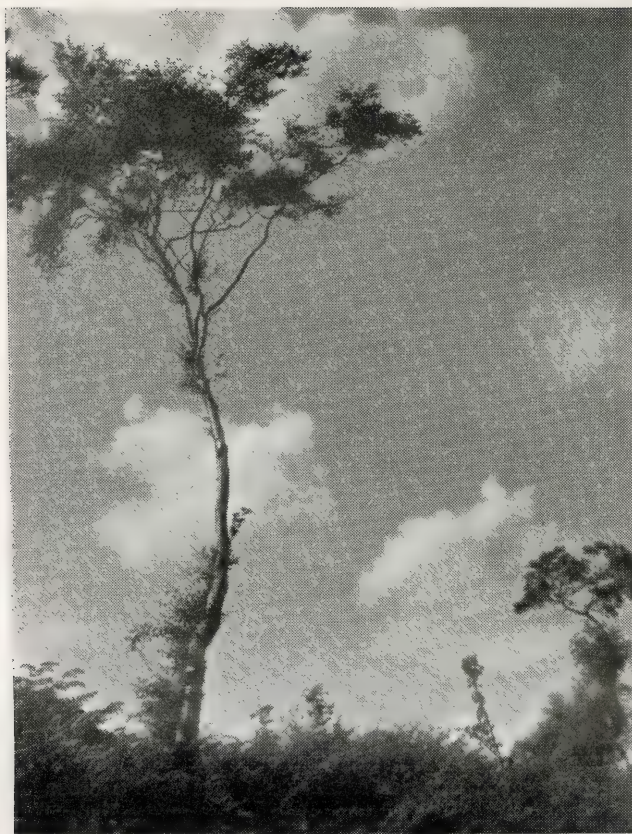
An important aid to rapid setting-up is the folding type of screen on spring-loaded rollers and jointed arms, such as the Celfix. The screen, when not in use, is protected in a long closed box, and to erect it it is only necessary to open the lid and pull the top bar of the screen upwards until it reaches its limit. To close the screen, the action is reversed and the screen is packed away in a few seconds.

Such screens can, however, be mixed blessings, because a screen must be placed at a reasonable height from the floor and none of the self-erecting screens are, to our knowledge, provided with any means of supporting them

(Continued on next page)



The comparative emptiness of the scene does not detract from its appeal, since the eye is led to a point of interest.



THE HOME CINE SHOW

(Continued from previous page)

over-shadow the main purpose of projection, which is to show pictures in such a manner that the audience can see them as clearly and comfortably as possible.

We have in mind one such cinema where a two yard length had been taken off an already short room by the arrangements at the screen end, and a similar distance pared off at the other end for a projection box. The screen was relatively high, with the result that the audience suffered physical torture from strained necks which lasted until the programme ceased, while at the same time the picture was so wide that a certain amount of eye strain resulted in an attempt to scan an illuminated area which was larger than the normal field of vision.

Lighting Control

In quite a number of other cases so-called "effect" lighting with coloured bulbs was either so badly designed that the bulbs themselves could be seen or else the power of the effect light was high enough badly to degrade the quality of the picture on the screen.

The most desirable lighting control is that which provides for the dimming-out of the room lights at the beginning of projection. If the audience are plunged immediately from full normal room lighting to the relatively feeble illumination of the screen they will be partially blind to the opening sequences. Slow dimming out of the room lights allows time for the eyes of the audience to accommodate themselves to the new conditions before the pictures are put on. There are a number of variable dimming resistances—such as those sold by Westminster Photographic Exchange or Cine Traders, Ltd.—which may be wired into your ordinary lighting circuit by a competent electrician.

Remotely Controlled Curtains

Similar devices may be used to control coloured effect lights which should shine from hidden sources on to the screen, and may be used in conjunction with the opening titles of a film. Effect lighting, however, should always be relatively weak so that it does not spoil the vigour and quality of the titles. Public cinemas frequently offend in this respect.

Another pleasant refinement of projection is a pair of remotely controlled curtains which open and close slowly and smoothly. But please do not operate them by means of cords running over noisy or squeaky pulleys, or by means of an electric motor which whines when it operates.

The placing of the projected picture is very important. It is not sufficient that it should be possible to view it comfortably from the projector. The audience should be able to see it in equal comfort. The projectionist often stands, whereas the audience are in seats, and may have to bend their necks slightly backwards to see the screen properly. The picture should be of such a height

at a height. So they have to be put on top of a table, or the piano, with consequent clearing away of impedimenta and the returning of it to position after the show, under the anxious eye of the lady of the house.

For shots in which there is a good deal of sky, wait until there are clouds about, otherwise the background is likely to be empty and dull.

On the other hand, those screens which have their own tripod or pillar supports are rarely of the self-closing and opening type. In nearly every case they are supported on a single pillar and tend to rotate freely through 20 or more degrees—sometimes during projection—with consequent distortion of the picture. Ensign got over this with an excellent screen which is supported on pillars at both ends.

There is an American screen with a central pillar support which has the roller blind at the top, the screen being pulled downwards to open it, but this still suffers with trouble from rotation around the pillar. The ideal system, in our opinion, would be a box-contained screen of the Celfix type, with two folding pillars, one at each end of the box. This could be carried with ease, and erected at the chosen height almost instantly.

Elaborate Effects

Many sub-standard cine enthusiasts lavish their enthusiasm on the preparation of elaborate arrangements for "dressing up" the showing of their films. They build models in imitation of "real" cinemas, complete with model organs and organists, automatic curtains and effect lighting, and more often than not associate the showing of their films with incidental music. All this is very much to the good, provided that it does not

that it just clears the heads of the audience and, if it is necessary to place the front rows really close to the screen, they should be equipped with chairs in which a seated person is able to recline backwards.

Do not make your picture too large. In home showing you will rarely be faced with the problem of it being too small, but there is always grave danger of going to the other extreme. Amateurs often make the mistake of imagining that it is desirable, because public cinema screens are huge, to get as large a picture as possible, but public cinema screens are at best a compromise in size between what is reasonably comfortable for the front rows, and what is visible to the back rows in the farthest part of the house. Because the front rows are the cheapest seats they naturally receive the least consideration in this matter of size.

A good plan, to enable you to judge for yourself the correct size of the screen, is to measure from seats in a good part of a public cinema the angle subtended by two imaginary lines extending from the right and left limits of the screen to your eye. It can be measured by holding a ruler or similar object at full arm's length in front of you and parallel with the screen surface. You will generally find that it is possible to cover the screen with an ordinary postcard held in this way. In your home projection the limits of your projected picture should subtend a similar angle to the eye of a person seated half way down the group of seats set up for your audience.

It is desirable always to project your films to the same size, even when only carrying out test runs for your personal information. We know that this is an ideal which may not often be followed, but such a practice will help you with your cine work. The connection may at first seem remote, but we would again direct your attention to the remarks on intensity of illumination in the December issue. It will be apparent from these that the density of the image on the film, the intensity of the light, and the brilliance and quality of the picture on the screen are all intimately connected.

Now if you show a picture four feet wide with your projector and, with a given film, it gives a screen brilliance of the value of x , and then you move your projector up towards the screen until it shows a picture only two feet wide, the screen brilliance with the same film will go up to $4x$. That is because in the first case you were requiring the same amount of light to illuminate four times the area it is occupying in the second case. A shot which appeared correctly exposed in the first case might appear thin and washed-out in the second, while another shot which was correct in the second case would possibly have appeared heavy and dense in the first.

While it is possible for you to make mental allowances for such differences it will greatly assist you in your quest for quality if you can always work to relatively the same screen brilliance.

Letters For Super-Imposition

(THIS TITLING BUSINESS : 5)

By George Neilson

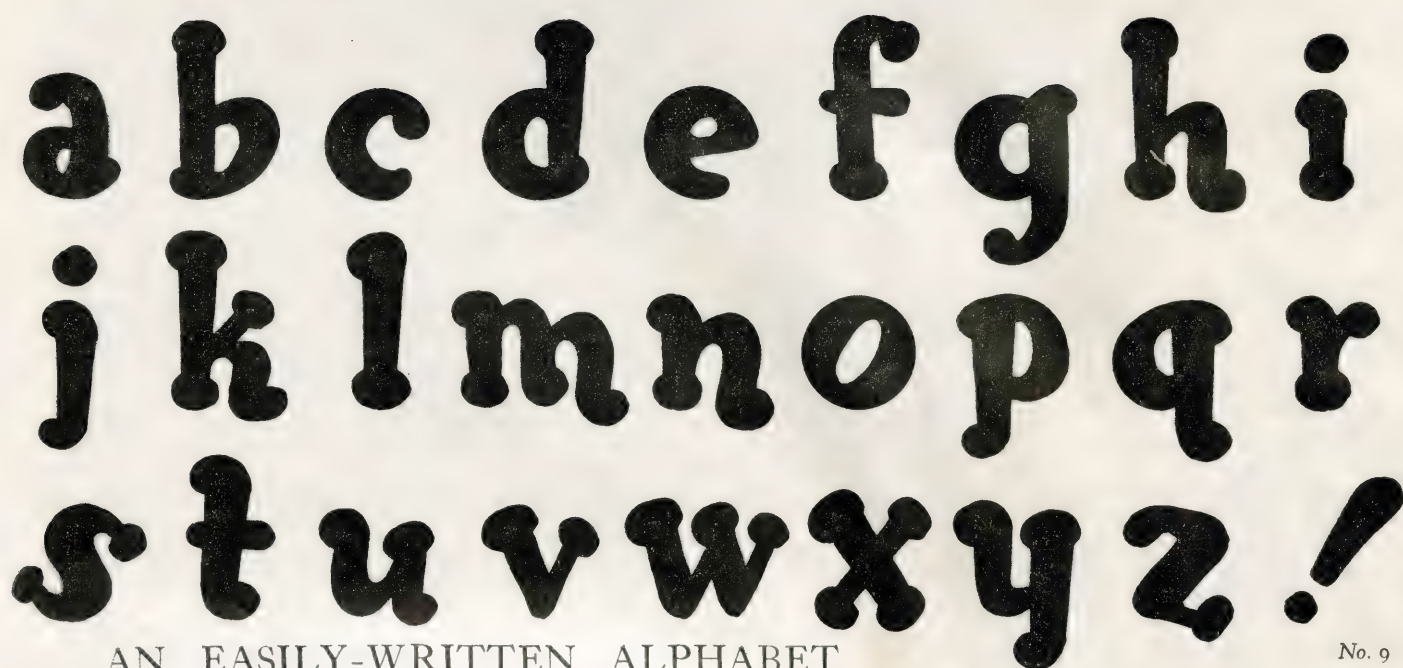
A LPHABET number 8 is a typical example of a modern letter form suitable for cine use. The clean cut outlines and the rather ample width of the A, C, O, R, etc., give it a legibility distinctly above the average, whether in the form given, that is, black letters on white ground, or as a negative. On account of its heavy—although for all that—graceful face, it is one of the most suitable forms to use for super-imposition work, since it is still perfectly readable even when some of the component limbs of the letters coincide with a background lacking contrast and become partially obscured. It can be used quite aptly in magazine films, for the headings of diary titles and so on.

One use for which it will be found almost indispensable, and which is the chief reason for including it in this series, is in the construction of model or fake signposts, direction signs and similar notices. It is similar in style to the alphabets in common use for such purposes, yet lacks some of the idiosyncrasies of the commercial form which render them awkward for small scale work.

It is not difficult to draw, but calls for the use of

(Continued on next page)





AN EASILY-WRITTEN ALPHABET

No. 9

(Continued from previous page)

compass and straight edge and a considerable amount of patience! A high degree of precision is essential if a good-looking title is to result and the greatest care must be exercised in tracing it; in fact, unless the worker has a good "eye" it will be advisable for him actually to measure the stroke width to ensure consistency throughout.

The fact that lower case letters are not given—in view of the many curves of small letters, a satisfactory form involves work which few amateurs would care to undertake—means, unfortunately, that it is limited in use either to titles of short context or to those written on large-sized cards. It is, however, essentially an alphabet for main titles and such other uses as those given above, and should not be adopted for general sub-title work or for long descriptive matter.

An even width to all the lines can be assured if one of the pens giving a constant thickness stroke is used, but a better method is to outline the letters with a fine-line pen and then to fill them in. The worker will find that the letter width varies to a considerable extent; few letters, for instance, occupy a full square except A, M, O, Q, etc., while E, F, P and S are particularly narrow. These differences contribute largely to the character of the style and should always be retained.

Finally, it must be noted that little extension is possible without spoiling the letter forms and outlines, while no condensation at all is recommended. Spacing can, if necessary, be somewhat loose, but unless it is absolutely necessary to resort to some such subterfuge, the amateur is advised to adhere rigidly to the outlines given and to maintain reasonably close spacing.

Alphabet number 9 consists solely of lower case letters; for ease of execution, speed and legibility, it has no equal. The looseness of form, heavy terminals, tapered strokes and rather disconcerting angles make

strict accuracy quite unnecessary. Nevertheless, the writing line can, and should be, adhered to for all ordinary work.

First, however, a suitable pen must be used; one having a large round point with which the bulbous serifs can easily be formed is that recommended. An ordinary pen or brush *can* be used but only by sacrificing speed and the flowing smoothness of the curves. Secondly, it must not be used too often or it will pall and the novelty of the unusual form will be lost. Again, it is a style more suited to cine work than most, and the amateur, on discovering for himself the simplicity and the speed with which it can be drawn, must for that very reason moderate his enthusiasm for such a special purpose alphabet which can lose so much in undue repetition.

The lack of capitals is not really a matter of any great concern, for the lower case letters can, in fact, be used

(Continued on page 492)

**One wild
night** G.N.

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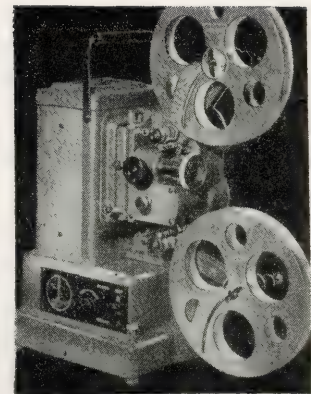
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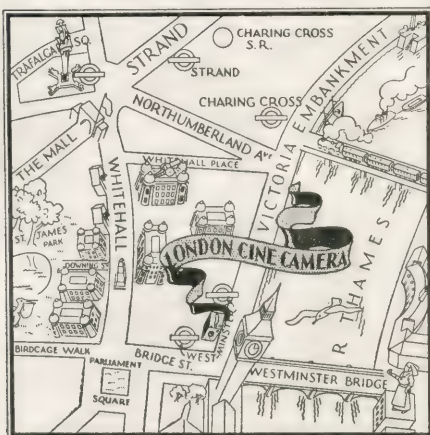
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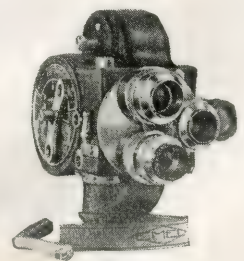
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Endless Entertainment

As is well known, loop films are used quite commonly for educational purposes, chiefly in mathematics for illustrating cyclic movements, oscillations, etc. By running continuously through the projector a looped, endless band of film containing one or more complete cycles, the movement can be watched *ad lib.* Thus can the mathematicians see a more concrete representation of their abstract analytical geometry.

But other things than mathematics go in unending cycles. We call to mind our neighbour's new baby; the (scheduled if not actual) arrangement of the seasons; the appearances of Certain Bills, etc., as less abstruse but no less definite cycles: and, starting from these, applications of the loop film principle to entertainment come to mind.

For clarity, consider loop films in three classes:—

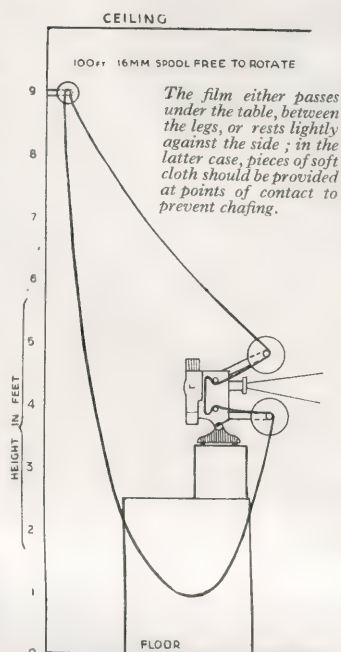
- (a) Mathematical.
- (b) Simple incident consisting of repeated movements.
- (c) Short story that ends just where it started.

Here are examples of these three types:—

- (a) The locus or path of a point on the edge of a circular disc rolling along a plane. This (a series of hoops) is of importance in Mechanics, and is well illustrated by a loop film.
- (b) Two people playing leap-frog. The jumper jumps continuously, running in a circular path. Thus each circle is one cycle. Again, a high-dive, followed by the same in reverse motion: in this case the "there-and-back" constitutes one cycle. These are the sort of subjects that are depicted in those little crudely-drawn books the leaves of which one flicked over with childish fingers in the dear old days. A slightly more advanced subject of this class would be a series of twelve shots of suitable character with the name of a month superimposed on each—again, a complete cycle.
- (c) A scenario for a film in the cyclic story class is given below. Subjects can be thought-up fairly easily: no originality is claimed for the one given, which is based on the traditional lines:—"There's a hole in the bucket, Eliza, Eliza," etc. This is a good example, however, as no titles are needed.

Production Notes

The films in class (a) are done by stop-motion in the same way as moving lines on maps and the like. Class (b)



A Novel Use for Loop Films

By H. A. V. BULLEID, M.A.

generally calls simply for one or two mid-shots. Care must be taken in joining these that the actors are occupying identical positions at the end of one shot and the start of the next: otherwise a continuity shot must be inserted; for example, close-up of a gaping onlooker. One other precaution: one cycle may make so short a loop that it cannot be threaded in the projector comfortably—particularly in the case of 8-mm. In this case, two cycles or more must be filmed: they need not, of course, be identical. As regards class (c), here is the scenario:—

- | | | | | |
|-----|-------|--|----|---------|
| 1. | CM.S. | a bucket on the ground, upside down. | 48 | frames. |
| 2. | C.S. | there is a small but definite hole in it. | 40 | " |
| 3. | C.S. | a man looks down at it with exasperation— | 48 | " |
| 4. | M.S. | he searches his pocket, produces a small wooden plug, which | 96 | " |
| 5. | C.S. | —he tries to jam into the hole; but it is too big, so— | 48 | " |
| 6. | CM.S. | —he takes out his knife to whittle it down— | 56 | " |
| 7. | C.S. | —but the wretched thing's blunt, will not cut— | 48 | " |
| 8. | C.S. | he raises his eyes to heaven, then turns them in the direction of— | 48 | " |
| 9. | C.S. | —a grindstone. | 48 | " |
| 10. | M.S. | he pockets the wooden plug, proceeds towards grindstone, but— | 64 | " |
| 11. | C.S. | —suddenly lets out an oath— | 24 | " |
| 12. | C.S. | —because the water-tank is quite empty— | 48 | " |
| 13. | C.S. | he looks round towards— | 32 | " |
| 14. | C.S. | —the hand-pump— | 48 | " |
| 15. | M.S. | he puts away his knife, moves towards the pump, but stops dead with a fearful cry, as he sees— | 64 | " |

16. as shot 1.

17. as shot 2. And so on; 15 shots make the complete cycle, consisting of 760 frames, that is, 48 seconds. This would occupy 19 feet of 9 or 16 mm. film or 9½ feet of 8 mm.

It should be emphasized that the same production care is required for the above type of triviality as any film-play: and in case anyone is tempted to ask why it is considered necessary to waste time so flamboyantly, here are the ready replies:—

- (1) The shortness makes it possible to do the cutting with real precision and finesse, without undue fatigue.

(Continued on page 484)

“AUNTIE AND THE BLACK-OUT”

By ALEX STRASSER, F.R.P.S.

(Author of “Ideas for Short Films”)

IN my last article I discussed various ideas for war-time films and promised to work out a few shooting-scripts. Here is the first of them, using the black-out as a documentary background. The story itself does not claim to be of particular merit beyond the fact that its gags and incidents are derived from the peculiarities of the human existence in the black-out.

The subject is treated in a light way, as a little comedy and remains in the domestic—or rather, private—sphere. The purpose of such a film, in my view, is to show how our *own* life is affected by war-time conditions. The present story may happen to anybody living in a fair-sized town in, say, January, 1940. But there is no reason why the black-out should not be considered to be a suitable background for a thriller, ghost story, or a

melodrama, if your taste and ambitions tend toward such treatment.

The story proper is preceded by a cross-cut section establishing atmosphere and appearance of the black-out in general. This is necessary in order to make the yarn plausible to anybody not familiar with the present strange conditions of life, specially for the “generations to come.”

In the following script, L=Long shot, M=Mid-shot, C=Close-up, T=Title. Some technical notes will be found at the end.

“Auntie and the Black-out”

1. C Newspaper announcement: TODAY'S BLACK-OUT TIME 5.20 p.m.
2. C A clock. The arms pointing to 5.15.
3. M A fruit-stall in the street, with an acetylene lamp burning.
4. C The owner puts a piece of newspaper round it as a shade.
5. M A big window of a department store brightly illuminated. Now the lights go out.
6. L An office building with many lit windows. One by one the lights are extinguished. The last window remains lit for a few seconds, then it gets dark as well.
7. M (Interior) A big window of a club room or a lounge. A very smart butler draws the curtains.
8. M (Int.) A drawing-room window. The curtains are drawn by a maid.
9. M (Int.) The window in a study. An elderly gentleman lets down a roller blind.
10. M (Int.) A kitchen-window. The house-wife fixes a paper-covered frame into the opening of the window.
11. M (Int.) A shabby-looking room. An old man pins a big and crumpled sheet of paper against the window.
12. M (Int.) A workman's quarter. The inhabitant covers the window somehow with an old apron or coat.
13. L A street in a residential district. The lights in the last two or three windows are just being extinguished and the street remains in the failing light of the day, with

a few people hurrying home, their indistinct figures dimly melting into the shadows of the house-fronts.

Fade out
Fade in

14. L The same street in darkness. The only things seen are the lamps of a car being parked and several moving circles of light thrown by the torches of some people walking home.
15. M The camera follows one of these light circles. Suddenly it takes a sharp turn, moves up some steps and illuminates the front door of a house.
16. C The key-hole of the door in the light of the torch. The key is being inserted and turned. The door opens.
17. M (as in 15) The figure of a man, standing out against the light of the torch in front of him, enters the house, and the closing door fades the picture out.
18. C Another door opens. The torch appears, its light falls against the wall and lights up a switch. A hand turns it.
19. M The light goes on and reveals a young man (James by name),

standing in hat and coat at the door to his room. He enters, shuts the door, throws hat and torch on a chair and is just taking off his coat when something arrests his attention.

20. C A telegram envelope, lying on the table.
21. M James, his coat half taken off, approaches the table and picks the envelope up.
22. MC He looks at it surprised, tears it open and, unfolding the form, reads the message.
23. CC The telegram form reading: “ARRIVING 6.45 P.M. BY COACH STOP MEET ME TERMINUS STOP IF PREVENTED COME BRISTLEWOODS 57 CANFIELD ROAD WHERE I WILL STAY—AUNTIE.”
24. MC James' face, first expressionless, turns lugubrious. Suddenly he looks round at the clock on the mantelpiece.
25. CC It is 6.15.
26. M He frowns, looks again at the telegram, then swiftly readjusting his coat, takes up his hat and torch, opens the door and turns the light switch. It gets dark. In the light of the torch he passes through the door which closes behind him.
27. M A circle of light moves into the picture, hits the foot of a pole, travels up the pole and reveals at its upper end the sign: “COACH STOP.” The light rests a while on it, and then wanders down again and
28. C is thrown onto James' hand holding a watch.

Sorry, but—

THE AMATEUR CINEMATOGRAPHER'S DIARY for 1940 is sold out. We ourselves cannot supply any copies at all and we are daily receiving requests—which we cannot fulfil—from dealers for further supplies. It is possible, but not very likely, that your local dealer may have a copy left.

Fade out
Fade in

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

29. CC The arms of the watch point to 6.55.
 30. C James' face, hardly distinguishable, gazes into the darkness around him.
 31. M Next to the stop, faintly visible, stand several people. James directs the light of his torch on to the face of one of them.
 32. C A fierce-looking colonel, thus flood-lit, becomes very indignant.

Light Incidents

33. C The light quickly jumps on to the next person and illuminates a young man kissing his girl-friend goodbye.
 34. C Discreetly the light wanders on and is arrested by a baby on the arm of its mother. Hit by the light it starts crying.
 35. C The light travels on and comes to a halt on the bulky shape of a policeman's helmet. It is quickly removed from there and directed again on to
 36. C the hand of James, this time holding the telegram. The light circle is focussed on the address: Bristlewood, 57, Canfield Road.
 37. M The light falls on to the ground, starts moving, illuminates the feet of the people just shown, and wanders slowly away from the stop.
 Fade out
 Fade in
 38. C A match flares up and illuminates for a fraction of a second the face of James who wants to light a cigarette. But before he succeeds, the match is blown out by the wind.

39. C The torch is switched on and floods James' matchbox which proves to be empty. James throws it angrily away.
 40. T "Now, where do I get some matches?"
 41. C A shop sign: "SMITH. OPEN."
 42. M The shop door from inside. It opens and James' head appears, peeping into the shop.
 43. M Interior of the shop as seen from James' viewpoint. The shop appears to be a hairdresser's.
 44. C James withdraws his head quickly.
 45. C Another shop sign: "OPEN."
 46. M As in 42.
 47. M As in 43. This time it is a butcher's shop.
 48. C As in 44.

Finding the Shop

49. C Another sign: "BARKER. OPEN."
 50. M As in 42.
 51. M As in 43. It is an undertaker's shop, and the owner smilingly comes forward to open the door for James.
 52. C James' head disappears even more rapidly.
 53. C A quick succession of shop signs: "JONES. OPEN," "OPEN," "SHERIDAN. OPEN,"

A Script for

"AUNTIE AND THE BLACK-OUT"

"ELLIOT. OPEN," "OPEN," "OPEN."

54. C James, at last, standing at a tobacconist's counter, lights his cigarette.
 55. M He walks to the door, opens it and disappears.
 Fade out
 Fade in

Difficulties in the Dark

56. M A light circle moves into the screen and fixes itself after some fumbling on a street sign: ASHLEY ROAD. It wanders on.
 57. M Similar scene. The street sign reads: BANTIG ROAD.
 58. M Similar scene. This time it is BROOKLAND ROAD.
 59. M A black shape, hardly to be seen, stands in the darkness of the street. James, of a similar shadowy appearance, approaches it.
 60. T "Excuse me, sir, isn't Canfield Road somewhere here?"
 61. M As in 59. The dark figure neither replies, nor stirs. James switches his torch on and sees that he was talking to a letter-box. He moves on.
 62. M Similar to 56-58. At last the sign reads: CANFIELD ROAD.
 63. M The torch lights up a garden door in search of a number. It is 18.
 64. L We see the circle of light move on to the next door.
 65. C It is No. 16.
 66. L The light crosses the road and finds another number.

But James Arrives

67. C It is 15.
 68. M The light passes another door. It is No. 39.
 69. C Similar scene. No. 53.
 70. C Same scene. No. 61.
 71. M The light turns back.
 72. M Similar to previous shots. This time it is No. 59.
 73. C In the light of the torch James' hand works the door-knocker.
 Fade out
 Fade in
 74. M Interior of drawing-room. Mr. Bristlewood reads his paper in an easy chair in front of the fireplace. The doors opens and James enters, followed by Mrs. B. James shakes hands with Mr. B and then turns to the lady.
 75. MC James talking to her.
 76. T "Auntie wired me to call here in case I missed her at the Coach stop."
 77. MC As in 75. Mrs. B. replies:
 78. T "She hasn't arrived yet. Won't you wait with us?"
 79. MC As in 75. James, nodding, accepts the invitation.



Detail shots of this kind often make useful continuity links, since there is no action which might conflict with that in adjoining shots.

War-Time Filming

80. M As in 74. James pulls another chair to the fire and sits down. Mrs. B. resumes her knitting, Mr. B. his reading. James stretches his legs, looking at the clock.
 81. C It is just 8 o'clock.
 82. C Mrs. B.'s knitting-needles rattling away.—Dissolve to
 83. M Mr. B. turning a page of his paper.—Dissolve to
 84. C James lighting another cigarette.—Dissolve to
 85. C The clock. It is now 9 o'clock.—Dissolve to
 86. C Same as 82.—Dissolve to
 87. M Same as 83.—Dissolve to
 88. M James, sitting drowsily in his chair, his eyes half closed. (The single shots of this sequence should last for quite a while on the screen and the dissolves should be slow in order to emphasise the boredom and dullness of these hours).

Sudden Doubts

89. M James starts and looks at the clock.
 90. C It is now nearly 10 o'clock.
 91. M He jumps up from his chair, stirring Mr. and Mrs. B into some action. He says:
 92. T "I think I'd better go home. I'll come again to-morrow."
 93. C Mr. B., looking intently into his paper, as if just attracted by a paragraph, reads:
 94. T "34 black-out casualties last week. Perhaps Auntie has been run-over."
 95. C Mrs. B., looking appalled.
 96. T "How can you say such dreadful things?"
 97. C James stares at them idiotically.
 98. M Then, as if struck by an idea, quickly shakes hands and disappears through the door, followed by Mrs. B.
 Fade out
 Fade in

James Gets Going

99. M A public call box in the light of James' torch. He enters it.
 100. C The 'phone is floodlit by the torch. James dials and listens.
 101. M A policeman at the other end of the line lifts the receiver. "Hallo."
 102. C James talking into the microphone.
 103. T "Do you know of any accidents to-night?"
 104. C The policeman talking.
 105. T "Not yet. Sorry."
 106. C Policeman replaces receiver.
 107. C James dials and listens again.
 108. M This time a nurse answers the 'phone.
 109. C James talking.
 110. T "Is that the casualty ward? Have any cases been brought in since 7 o'clock?"
 111. C Nurse talking.

112. T "Sure. A young girl got a glass splinter in her eye."
 113. C Nurse finishing talk and replacing receiver.
 114. M James replaces receiver and leaves the box.
 Fade out
 Fade in
 115. M James' room, as in 19. He shuts the door behind him, throws hat and torch on the chair and starts to take off his coat. Again he stops suddenly, his attention arrested by another telegram lying on the table.
 116. C

And That's That

117. M He picks it up, tears it open, unfolds the form and reads.
 118. C His face while he reads.
 119. CC The telegram form. The message says:
 "FORGOT BLACK-OUT STOP PREFER TRAVELLING DAY TIME STOP MEET ME TO-MORROW 12.20 STOP INFORM BRISTLE WOODS LOVE AUNTIE."
 120. C James' face, gazing stupidly at the wire. Then it starts expressing the various emotions which are to be expected in these circumstances.
 The end.

This film, which would last on the screen for appr 5 minutes, seems at first sight to present a number of unsurmountable difficulties, but considering the single scenes in detail we shall see that things are not half as bad as they appear, and that all problems can be solved satisfactorily. Some ingenuity will, of course, be necessary.

To start with we must make good use of the period between sunset and the official black-out time. What there is of daylight will be just sufficient to suggest faintly outlines and contours of things and people. On the other hand, we are allowed to use during this period as many lights as we want or need, and we can employ a very powerful torch, supplemented by another one or by the headlamp of a car, as the case may be.

The scenes 13-15, 27, 56-73, 99 and 114 should be taken during this period and where necessary and possible the shooting could be done at the reduced speeds of 4, 6, or 8 pictures per second. Scenes 41, 45, 49 and 53 will have to be taken in single picture action and as, in this case, we can make it any exposure time we want, there will be no difficulties at all.

Several other outdoor shots can be taken more or less under cover. Scenes 16 and 17, as well as 28-39, should be staged in a garage or some similar locality, while scenes 100,



Since there is no action in this shot, it could be taken at 8 f.p.s., or slower speeds.

102, 107 and 109 (interior of call box) can also conveniently be taken somewhere indoors. All shots not mentioned here present no special black-out difficulties.

I would have liked to have given some exposure indications, but too much depends on the special light conditions of each individual scene, and even an experienced professional cameraman would have to make a number of exposure tests before he could start on the actual film. But whatever the difficulties, they will make the work only more interesting and the results, I hope, will justify all the trouble taken.

NEW DOCUMENTARY FILMS

Work on a number of professional documentary films has now been renewed according to "Documentary News Letter" (successor to "World Film News"). Mary Field, who has contributed to A.C.W., is making a diagram film for Manchester University about the circulation of money. Andrew Buchanan, another of our contributors, is making "Fire," a film showing the nation's fire-fighting services and the training of the A.F.S., and is finishing the Port of London Authority's film, "City of Ships." British Foundation Pictures are producing three films of life in the army, navy and air force and one on the life of deep-sea fishermen. Strand are doing a film on evacuation, G. B. Instructional, "Empire Round the Atlantic" and British Films, "London River." A number of other documentaries with war-time themes are also in production.

PEOPLE have been utterly perplexed and dismayed at the apparent divergence between *Professor Mamlock* and the Russian handshake with Nazi Germany, and their attack upon the Finns. What is the explanation?

The Russians base their social life upon a highly word-loaded philosophic tradition that derives from Germany, and that only the genius of a Lenin was capable of transmuting into reality. With Lenin's death in 1924, in the midst of industrial re-building, the confused Germanic exercise of word-spinning and hair-splitting was reinforced with all the prestige of State power.

Not only their philosophy, however, but their literature, their drama, their films and every side of their cultural life are based almost entirely upon Central European cultural tradition. The latest product of this tradition is *Professor Mamlock*. This film, adapted from a despairing play by a despairing German exile, may well have been the last straw on the Russian camel's back, the one last picture that flung the Russian people into the arms of the Nazis. The mood of the pre-Nazi intellectuals, that prepared the way for Hitler was the same despairing mood that brought Hitler a new lease of life, and plunged the world into war.

Literary Presentation

Professor Mamlock, on the point of being silenced for ever by Nazi machine-guns, cries from the balcony of his clinic: "Go on, shoot! Go on shooting women, old men and children. Future generations will remember you as a horrible nightmare."

As in nearly every Soviet talkie film, the method of presentation in *Professor Mamlock* is literary, or word-conditioned. It will be noticed that the main message of the film is delivered at the end, in words, directed at the Nazis in the square below. The limelight is centred almost entirely upon Mamlock and what he is saying. During the greater part of his speech he is alone on the balcony. The real recipients of his speech, therefore, are not the Nazis whom we scarcely see, but the people who are looking at Professor Mamlock face to face, seated in the auditorium.

Bearing this in mind, we may readily realise the danger of imbuig a Russian audience with the downright suggestion: "Go on, go on shooting women, old men and children," especially when one considers what the

THE PROBLEM OF RUSSIA...

DOES THE CINEMA EXPLAIN IT?

By

E. W. and M. M. ROBSON

(Authors of "The Film Answers Back")

audience will absorb, unconsciously, from the film itself. Mamlock, having been deprived of his post by a malevolent Nazi, and having been paraded through the streets in humiliation, is sitting contemplating suicide (a highly reprehensible idea to put into a film) when he is asked by a Nazi, in the name of humanity, to operate upon a Nazi leader. Despite what he and his

folk are going through, he saves the Nazi leader's life. Again humiliated, and driven out of his job, Mamlock slowly walks out of the clinic like a somnambulist, and overpowered by self-pity, shoots himself.

He has a wife, he has a son, he has a duty to his fellows in distress, he sees a nurse being dragged away by Nazis, and he might have used his bullet to a little better purpose (having been a hero at Verdun), but this pattern of a man, held up to us for admiration, thinks only of himself. Mamlock recovers, however, and is nursed back to be preserved for the speech, which he will deliver in the manner of the hero whom Mamlock so much admires, Dimitrov. This woolly romantic, Mamlock, forgets that Dimitrov made his speeches at the Reichstag fire trial, as a successful way of getting himself away alive, and not as an invitation for being machine-gunned.

The whole picture stresses the negative and the despairing. Only one method of countering the Nazis is put forward—cyclostyled sheets distributed illegally, to tell about "the wrath, fury and suffering of the German people." The shocking naivety of the people engaged in this illegal work, the way they endanger the cafe proprietor by leaving tell-tale beer-glasses and cigarette ends about, the way they endanger the old milk-

seller, the garage hand and the hospital workers, their complete lack of the resource and subtlety demanded in their position are quite painful to witness.

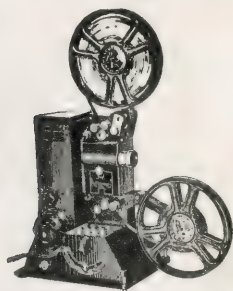
Whatever we in Britain may see in this exposure of Nazidom, this picture, taken in line with hundreds of Russian films of a similar despairing character, has one moral for a Russian audience. It is this: "In suicide shoot straight the first time—the Nazis will get you anyway."

The Nazis scoop up the naive distributors of the illegal news-sheets. The Nazis get their officer cured by the disgraced Professor. The Nazis trample upon all the decencies. The Nazis are left triumphant in the end. So what? Since the Nazis are presented as being so invincible, the obvious inference is to come to terms with them. It is quite clear what it is a Russian audience carries away after seeing *Mamlock*. It is not that the Nazis can be beaten and how they can be beaten,

The Screen in a New Light

In view of the considerable interest that was aroused by the review of "The Film Answers Back," in a recent issue, we have asked the authors to give their views here on the extent to which the realities of the political situation can be interpreted by the Film. You may not be prepared to go as far as they do, but their opinions make interesting reading. (See also page 463.)

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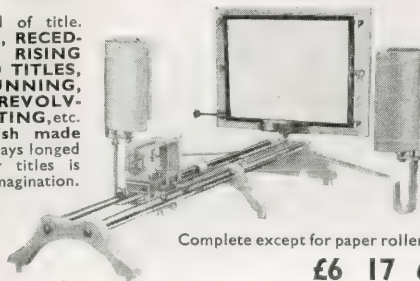
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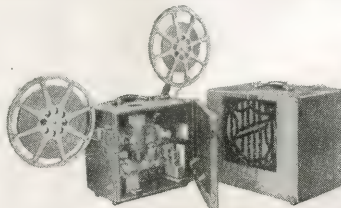
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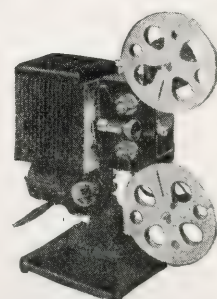
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Dear Sir . . .

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN A READER AND THE EDITOR

WE will call him Mr. X, because, although he cuts a very creditable figure in the correspondence below, he tells us that he feels that, in making it public, he is to be butchered to make a Roman holiday. We feel pretty sure that he knows us well enough to realise that we shouldn't dream of throwing him to the lions. He has made an interesting film. He has certain definite opinions about film-making. It is because we think those opinions would be of interest to others that we publish part of the correspondence here.

Readers often send apologetic letters with their films. They hope that we shall not be too bored or laugh in the wrong places. They hope that they have not wasted our time. These misgivings indicate a spirit receptive to criticism, and we applaud their self-effacement. But we are never bored by even the most indifferent film, for the very faults are invariably illuminating; and if ever we were guilty of laughing unsympathetically at other people's honest mistakes, we hope we should have some remnant of decent feeling left to persuade us that the time had come for us to relinquish this fascinating job of reviewing. We are too mindful of our own early efforts to think of pillorying those who tread the same road.

Well, now, Mr. X wrote to say that he was bothered to know what was wrong with his short film. "It is composed of shots from my collection of odd shots, and was made as a result of exhortations one sees to build up a film from stock shots. Actually, as far as I am concerned, it proves that it cannot be done. Not without taking more shots to amplify the existing material." We don't quarrel with that.

The film is called "Gale Warning." The shots are, almost without exception, very expressive pictorially. They are well chosen and there is obvious artistry in their handling. But their sum total is not very considerable. To begin with, the main title appears to be wrong. It conjures up an impression of human activities brought about by a gale—a storm at sea is what occurs to one.

But in this film there are only very pleasant shots of landscape and sky seen first on a still day and then later with only a very little movement in them. There is not sufficient change to denote transition from calm to storm. One does not get an impression of a gale. But the film itself—if one is not led to expect too much from it—is quite pleasing.

A Suggested Remedy

We do not think it worthwhile to amplify it, because Mr. X would need to take about twice as many shots again, including many featuring human activities. He would thus be virtually making the film afresh. We suggest that the easiest way out is to change the main title to, say, "Pastoral," as a general description of the shots, and not to draw attention to the gale element. As a short pastoral it could quite well stand on its own.

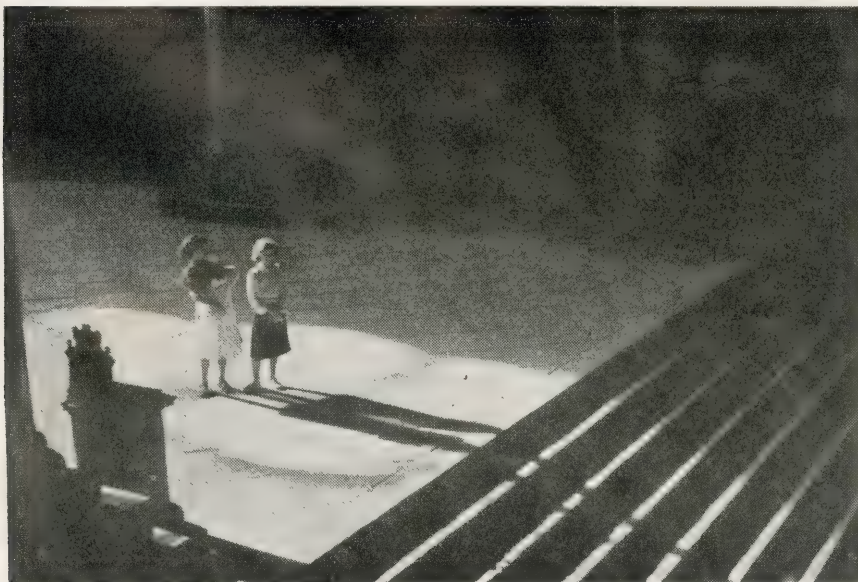
That was the substance of the criticism we communicated to Mr. X. "Although I very much appreciate your criticism," he wrote in reply, "I think that the main title is perfectly justified. 'Gale Warning' should not necessarily portray gale shots; only the shots leading up to a gale are necessary. At the same time, as others said the same as you did, it is perfectly evident that the word 'gale' causes expectation of storm scenes, regardless of the true meaning of the title.

"Regarding the addition of 'human interest' shots, well, that would spoil the film from my point of view. I wanted to keep the film natural. It is an easy matter to make a film with human actors. They can do what is wanted, when it is wanted. There is no waiting a month for a particular shot as is the case with 'natural' shots, while the editing is also much easier with the former type."

To that we replied: "We agree that the main title does not of itself necessarily suggest a film of a gale, but had not the word 'gale' been used, we should never have associated the

shots with the approach of one, but should have looked upon them rather as

A scene of high contrasts which demands careful attention to exposure. The meter-reading must not be taken too literally; it must be interpreted according to the effect it is desired to produce.



REVIEWED

Amateur films of any size, subject and gauge may be sent for review. Those that reach a reasonable standard of merit are awarded a Leader. A special animated Leader is given for films that are particularly noteworthy. Please do not send us your film until we ask you to, but first advise us that you have a film you wish reviewed, stating its length and gauge. We will then reserve a date for screening it, and inform you accordingly. Please do not forget to enclose the cost of return postage with your film. Address: The Editor, "Amateur Cine World," 300/304, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1.

indications of the coming of a fairly mild rain storm. But however the title is regarded, we do not think it is perfectly justified, as you suggest, if it leads people to anticipate something the author did not intend. It is, after all, the audience and not the author, who are the final judges.

"We do not quite understand your view that, to keep the film 'natural', people should not be included, for the inference is that, if people *are* included, then the film is 'unnatural'."

Mr. X replied that he entirely agreed with our contention about the title. "As to the matter of keeping the film 'natural', by this I meant that, in a film depicting an aspect of nature, as mine purported to do, it should be possible to portray her expressions without introducing the human element. The fact that I failed in this object does not, in my view, rule out the possibility of doing so, but at the same time I think it ought to be conceded that, to make a film of this description is infinitely more difficult than producing one portraying human emotions.

This 'Nature' Business

"In support of this I would point out that the effect which the film had on you—of indicating the coming of a fairly mild rain storm, is undoubtedly the impression most people would have and yet there were actually included three shots taken during a 70 m.p.h. gale.

"The question of this 'nature' business is a pet one with me. Personally I am of the opinion that A.C.W. pays rather too much attention to the story of a film, the most successful films (in the view of A.C.W.) being those which ape the professionals. 'Refuge' comes to my mind, yet I should feel I had been cheated had I seen a film like that at the cinema, although one must give every credit to the producers for *trying* to surmount the difficulties such a production must necessarily present.

"To my way of thinking, the best amateur films are those which are completely different from the commercial type. There is a parallel in the field of literature. It is not the best sellers and the popular novels which make the most lasting impression. Rather one remembers the little gems of thought which are expressed in writings considered insignificant in their time (the quotation in the King's speech, for instance).

"Probably I am like the private who was the only man in step, and I ought to fall in with your views and make 300 ft. reels depicting murder, love and horror. And yet I shan't, because so many people say, when they see these little cameos that I prefer to make: 'I used to like the interest pictures they showed at the cinema in the old days. I wish they would show them now.'"

The above is the gist of the letters exchanged, in which



A novel way of introducing a character to the audience is to tilt up from a shot of her reflection. But once is enough!

Mr. X's daughter played an indirect part, for he tells us, she usually buys him The Amateur Cinematographer's Diary each year, but because there was not a Leader with "Gale Warning," changed it for one on gardening. We are still puzzling out the implications of this.

We are equally puzzled to know why Mr. X should attribute to us a point of view we have never held: that the most successful films are those which ape the professionals; in other words, film plays. The introduction of 'human interest' shots does not necessarily transform a picture into a film play, and to do without them in order to savour the satisfaction of accomplishing a difficult task seems to us to be rather a curious proceeding. It is akin to exposing a great deal of footage solely to avoid the necessity for one short sub-title.

There are hundreds of subjects that do not demand the introduction of the human element, but scarcely one that is not benefited by it, if judiciously done. Mr. X's film is a case in point. Nature is supremely impersonal; it is man who gives her a personality when he speaks of her 'fury', her 'placidity', her 'anger', her 'gentleness'. We seek to read a meaning in her moods. We try to interpret them.

Three of the shots in "Gale Warning," we are told, were taken during a 70 m.p.h. gale. We should never have thought it. So here is a case in which nature must be helped out with human artifice. This is often desirable in films. Manufactured rain drops, for instance, are

(Continued on next page)

Readers' Films Reviewed

(Continued from previous page)

usually more effective on the screen than the real thing.

But Mr. X rather feels that it is taking an unfair advantage to stoop to tricks of this kind. It is not. It is the sensible procedure. After all, we are only concerned to get the best possible effect on the screen. If some things do not film well we must use substitutes. We cannot use wind machines as the professionals do, so the easiest way out is to employ the most readily available material : people.

We could take a shot of someone bowing his head before an imaginary storm or pulling a muffler tightly round his throat. Quickly cut into the sequence the fact that they are fakes would not be noticed. It should, however, be emphasised that such shots should be used sparingly and that they should be short. The people should not be featured ; their purpose is to act as a commentary, as it were.

Mr. X does not like amateur film plays. We like all kinds of amateur films provided they are creditably done ; but we agree that a bad film play is usually worse than a bad personal film, chiefly because one is conscious of more inconsistencies. Best sellers, however, often do make lasting impressions. What of "The Good Companions" ?

The crux of the matter seems to be that Mr. X spurns the popular touch. He follows a tortuous path. The public are not such nitwits as frustrated intellectuals would have us believe. They can be depended on in the long run to recognise merit. He does quite rightly to produce cameos of a distinctive character that give pleasure both to himself and to his audiences, but he would be ill-advised to handicap himself by spurning the gentle art of faking.

THE SAUCY SAILOR. By S. FOSTER. 100 ft. Kodachrome.

This little film has a pleasant enough theme in the fairy tale tradition. It gives pleasure to the children who take part (for what child does not like dressing up and acting ?) and suitably presented would have given pleasure to an audience who do not know them. But the whole film is, unfortunately, rather static and remote, due to incorrect treatment.

A girl sits reading in the garden. A sailor comes in—the sailor is a girl—and, it seems, offers her 'his' hand. She spurns 'him,' whereupon 'he' casts what appears to be a handful of coins on to the ground. At that the lady comes round, but she has had her chance. The sailor will have nothing to do with her and goes off, and the lady is left lamenting.

With the introduction of the sailor the whole of the film is taken in medium long shot. It is as if one is watching a play from the back row of the pit. It is all so remote. We are not quite sure what is happening. We can only see the players' faces from afar. The author should have broken up this section into sequences, including close-ups to show the girls' reactions.

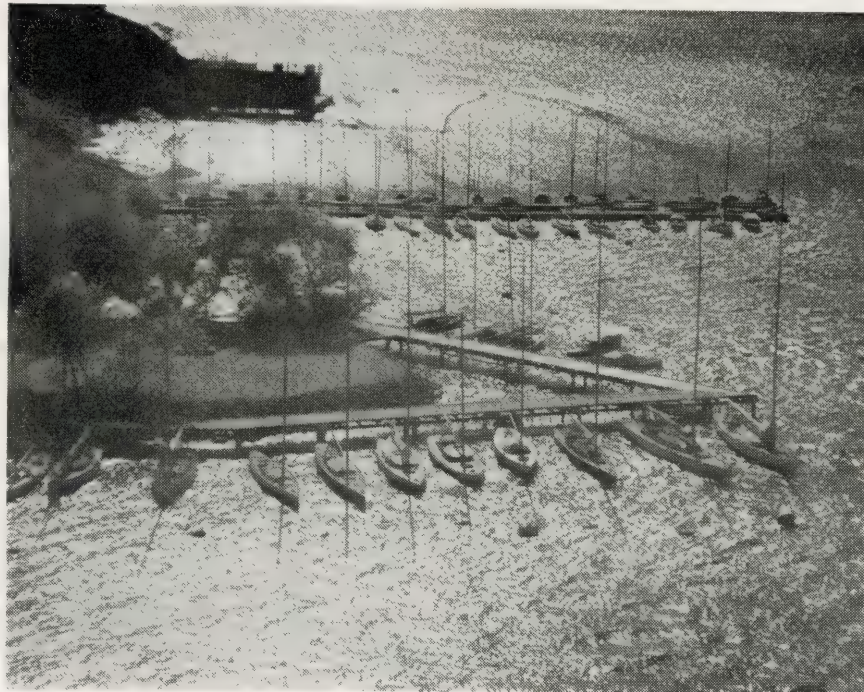
Close Shots Needed

We are not even sure that it is money that the sailor casts about with such supreme indifference. A close shot would have told us. Certainly one was needed of the coins in the girl's hand as she sadly picks them up and gazes at them when the mysterious stranger has gone.

There should have been frequent changes of angle : now a shot of the girl full face, with, in the foreground, part of the back of the head of the sailor : now a shot of 'him' as she sees 'him,' now one of her from 'his' viewpoint. The camera should get close up so that we may know what is going on and come to take an interest in those happenings.

"The Saucy Sailor" begins with a medium close-up of the girl sitting in the garden reading, but it is held on much too long. One is all the time expecting something to happen, but nothing does. This shot should be cut by at least half, so that the audience has no time to get fretful. It would be most unfortunate if they were to get into this mood right at the beginning of the film.

There is some intercutting when the sailor gets to the garden gate, but one of the intercut shots is over-exposed, so that there is an abrupt colour change, which defeats the purpose of the continuity device. It would be advisable to take out this shot and to amend the editing of the others slightly.

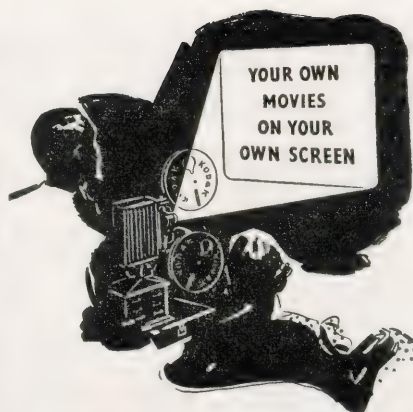


An effective contra-jour shot, rather too formal as a design, but suitable for the screen because the movement of the water will distract attention from this.



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81 STRAND

9.5mm. Pathescope "S" projector, shop soiled only. Cost £30
£22 15 0

9.5mm. and 16 mm. Bolex-Paillard G.916 projector, 500 watt lamp, complete with resistance for all voltages and case, perfect condition .. £37 10 0

9.5mm. Paillard-Bolex P.A., 250 watt lamp, resistance and case, almost new .. £16 17 6

16mm. Soho Kalee projector, 500 watt lamp, motor drive, reverse, "stills," special trip action safety device, resistance for all voltages and case, cost £55, absolutely as new throughout .. £27 10 0

8mm. Kodascope 8-30 projector, excellent condition .. £7 18 6

16mm. Bell & Howell Filmo 129D projector, 750 watt lamp, all movements, 1,600 ft. arms, resistance for all voltages, carrying case, new condition .. £65 0 0

8mm. Kodascope de Luxe, 200 watt, built-in resistance, case, as new .. £16 5 0

16mm. Kodascope "E" projector, 300 watt lamp, motor drive, etc., built-in transformer for all A.C. voltages, carrying case, perfect condition .. £19 17 6

16mm. Ensign "Super Silent 16" projector, 200 watt lamp, motor drive, reverse, resistance for all voltages, case, perfect order .. £11 15 0

16mm. Siemens "Standard" projector, all movements, built-in resistance, as new .. £28 17 6

16mm. Keystone projector, 750 watt lamp, reverse, resistance, case, and splicer, demonstration model only, cost £37 0 0 .. £27 10 0

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CAMERAS

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24 CHARING X ROAD

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16 mm. Keystone, 300 watts, complete, all voltages, unused, as new .. £10 17 6

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16 mm. Kodascope C, 100 volts, all mains. Perfect .. £6 17 6

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16 mm. Bell & Howell Filmo 200 volts. Resistance. £14 17 6

16 mm. Keystone, 500 watts. Complete, all voltages. As new .. £19 17 6

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16 mm. Victor, 500 watts. Unused, resistance, case .. £32 17 6

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8 mm. Kodascope 50R Mains Model. As new .. £11 17 6

16 mm. Victor "21", 750 watts, all enclosed, resistance, all voltages, 1,600 ft. arms. Excellent condition .. £35 0 0

16 mm. Victor, 500 watts, latest pattern, all voltages. As new. 2 in. Maxlite super lens .. £35 17 6

CAMERAS

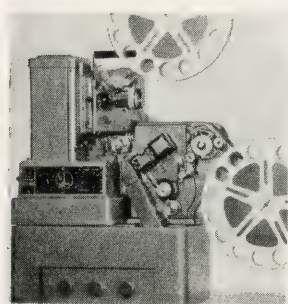
9.5 mm. Dekko de Luxe, all metal, f/1.9 .. £11 17 6

35 mm. Zeiss Kinamo, f/2.7 Tessar, 440 ft. magazines. Motor or hand. Carrying case .. £11 17 6

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FAULTLESS HOME TALKIES



Sound Projector

Bolex
paillard
SOUND APPARATUS

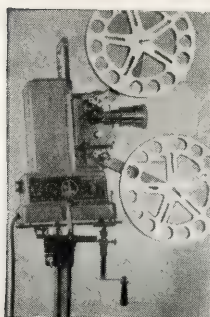
Here is the very latest in talkies, made in models for projecting 16 mm. sound and silent, or both 9.5 mm. and 16 mm. sound and silent at their proper speeds, retaining the special Bolex feature of being able to project silent films at speeds well below normal without flicker (as slow as 12 pictures per second) by means of the special Paillard-Bolex shutter equivalent to four obscurities.

BRIEF SPECIFICATION :

Fitted with 750 watt lamp and very efficient air cooling. Amplifier undistorted output 5 watts, giving ample volume for audience up to 500. Microphone and pick-up takings, a special Bolex feature being that it is possible to mix microphone, pick-up and sound film reproduction all at once, if desired, so that operator has perfect control, being able to make announcements by the microphone with or without musical accompaniments by means of the pick-up, and also to announce through the microphone.

With 750 watt lamp ready for 110 volt mains, Amplifier, loudspeaker and carrying cases. Prices from £121 0 0 MODEL "G" PROJECTORS. Models for all sub-standard sizes (9.5, 16 and 8 mm.). Now obtainable with BUILT-IN TRANSFORMER for all voltages from 110 to 250 volt A.C. Improved 1940 model ... £49 0 0 Write for details to Room 10.

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Endless Entertainment

(Continued from page 474)

- (2) The subject can be regarded as an experimental production, and new ideas in photography can be tried out on it (e.g., using red filter throughout for night effect).
- (3) Other departments can experiment on the same lines, making trick films, symbolic films, etc., under same (loop) condition. Several variations on the same scenario can be compared, from different directors, cameramen and actors.
- (4) A unique opportunity is at the same time afforded of studying in detail :—

Movements and gestures of the actor.

Compositions, balance, steadiness, of cameraman . . . not to mention behaviour of projector. . . .

- (5) Occasionally, a loop film may be made on the fag-end of a reel !

Storage

Loops up to 20 feet or so are workable, and these can be stored in flat cardboard boxes about eight inches square. The loop should be coiled loosely in a circle, taking care not to pinch the ends. One end will fill a corner of the box, the other will fill out the centre of the loose coil.

Projection

Loops up to 20 ft. are very easy to handle, and projection presents no difficulties, except that some support has to be made for the loop. It is in general simplest to rig up an empty small spool (e.g., a 100 ft. 16 mm. spool, which will serve equally well for all three gauges) on a screw in the wall above the projector, as high up towards the ceiling as possible. An empty reel is also put on each of the projector spool-arms ; and the loop passes over the ceiling spool, under the top projector spool, through the gate, over the lower projector spool, thence back up to the ceiling spool (See diagram on page 474). Take care that this return portion does not get in the way of the light beam from the projector. The spools on the projector act merely as guides, and their driving belts should be taken off so that they are free to rotate.

Very special care must be taken in threading the projector, as there is no leader to take the brunt of improperly engaged perforations, or blistered frames caused by switching on the lamp before the motor. It is necessary, also, for films in class (c) to start at about the right place ; so a piece of card should be held in front of the lens and withdrawn when the start is reached.

To use a "Home Movie" projector for loop films, it is necessary to make a saw-cut in the main casting immediately above the lamp-house pivot. As regards presentation, I have found it best to show a loop film quite casually in the middle of a programme. The loop rests idly over the ceiling spool (the correct way round for projecting, note !) till its turn comes. And, what a turn.

Mr. H. Chaplin, 43, Hudson Road, Plaistow, London, E.13, wishes to form a cine society in his district.

Running Commentary

Universal Stroboscope Disc Although 16 frames per second is now the recognised speed for silent films, this speed was gradually increased by the professionals in the period 1920-1929 until 24 frames per second was standardised for talkies. The average silent film of the 1923-1928 period was shot at 18 to 20 frames per second.

It is thus essential to be able to set one's projector speed as required when showing library films:—at 20 frames per second for the average late-period silent films, at 24 for silent versions of talkies, and at 16 for older silents as well as for modern silents. This can be very simply done by fixing a suitable stroboscope disc to the projector sprocket-spindle, or handle.

Consider an ordinary electric bulb working on standard 50-cycle alternating current mains: it lights up and goes out 100 times per second. If, therefore, this bulb is used to illuminate a circular white disc which has 100 black dots round its circumference and is rotated at one revolution per second, then the dots will appear to be stationary because, at every hundredth of a second when the bulb lights up, each dot will have exactly passed on one place, hence no movement will show.

Similarly, if a disc with 50 black dots is rotated twice per second, then again the dots pass a given point at the rate of 100 per

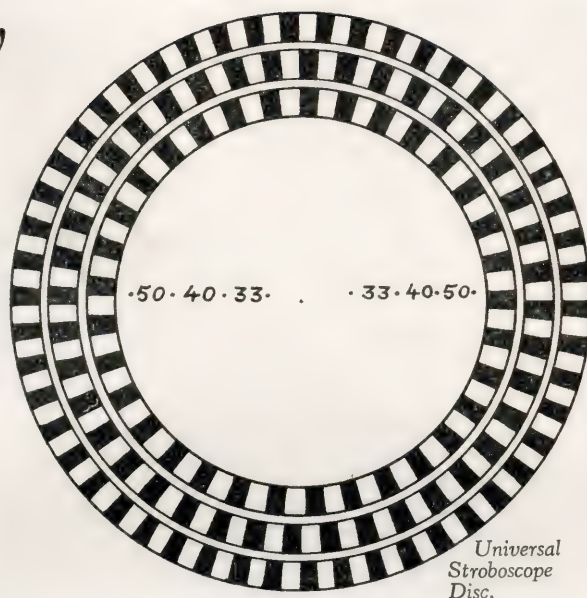
By
"SOUND
TRACK"

second and so again they will appear to be at rest. Further, at speeds just over two revs. per second of the disc, the dots will appear to wander slowly forwards, and conversely.

It is therefore obvious that if such a disc is attached to the 8-picture sprocket of a projector, the dots will appear stationary when the sprocket makes 2 revs. per second, i.e., the projector is running at 16 frames per second. We can mathematically connect (frames per sec.) and (number of dots) in the case of projectors with 8-picture sprockets by the formula:—

$$\frac{800}{\text{frames per second}} = \text{number of dots}$$

hence for 20 frames per second we require



40 dots, and for 24 per second, 33 dots.

Fig. 1 is a "Universal" stroboscope disc with rings of 33, 40 and 50 dots, and these rings will appear to become stationary at projecting speeds of 24, 20 and 16 frames per second respectively. A 5-watt lamp is sufficient to illuminate the disc, and it is

(Continued on next page)

ACHIEVEMENT

Something Attempted
Something Done!



"Celfix" Cine Screens

(REGD. TRADE MARK)

BRITISH PATENT NUMBERS

345925, 376385, 416403, 456133.

When war was thrust upon Great Britain and its Allies, it plunged all business, except those directly engaged upon armaments, into temporary chaos. Demand, enterprise and channels of supply shrivelled to nothing overnight in the blast of war. For instance, the continued manufacture of the world famous Celfix Screen looked well nigh impossible.

The Celfix Screen, indisputably the world's foremost portable screen, in both construction and superfine projection surfaces, was built in our own factory, but vital parts which made Celfix so famous, were imported from the enemy country.

Now R. F. Hunter, Ltd., with great enterprise, have taken up the oft repeated challenge 'Now is the British Manufacturer's chance.' Within four months of the outbreak of war, R. F. Hunter, Ltd., have formed a new company, known as Cine Screens, Ltd., whose object it will be to produce all necessary parts in our own works, excepting the rollers, which are unobtainable in this country and are being imported from a friendly nation.

The Celfix Screen is a British Invention, the exclusive property of R. F. Hunter, Ltd., and their determination to continue manufacture has fortunately resulted in great success.

There were many difficulties to be overcome, the chief of which was to guarantee to the user surfaces equal to the world famous Celfix Crystal Glass Beaded, Silver and Blankana (white) materials. We are proud to say that this will be done, as the new company will be under the supervision of a Czecho-Slovakian subject, who for years has been a well known expert in the production of Screen surfaces.

For the present, the sizes available will be catalogue Nos. 0 up to and including 3. It is exceedingly difficult to manufacture the large sized screen surfaces without joins, but as with the other difficulties already overcome, so will this problem, when production gets really under way, be solved and in a month or two's time the super size will be ready. It may be interesting to mention here that in the past Celfix Screens were made in sizes up to 13ft. x 10ft. without join, which is by far the largest portable screen in the world. Owing to the rising costs of raw materials, it is probable that prices must be increased, but R. F. Hunter's policy has always been to give the best possible value, and cine enthusiasts can rely on every effort being made to keep prices to the lowest possible.

Now you'll be prouder than ever to own a Celfix Screen—An All-British Product. It is confidently expected that the exports of Celfix Screens will be greatly increased. Already they are on sale in many countries, including the British Dominions. It is the new company's determination not only to provide the home market with the best screen available to-day, but to foster the export side of the business for, as the President of the Board of Trade has said: "Increased British exports are vital to the success of our war effort."

THERE ARE OTHER SCREENS TO BE PURCHASED, BUT THERE IS ONLY ONE CELFIX—THE ROLLS ROYCE OF THE CINE SCREEN WORLD. LOOK FOR THE REGISTERED TRADE MARK "CELFIX" ON EVERY SCREEN.

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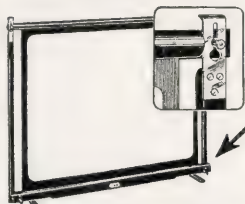
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Celfix Screen Works: 160/2/4, GRAY'S INN ROAD, LONDON, W.C.1. Tel. Nos. Hol. 7311/2.

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LIGHTWEIGHT SCREENS FOR BETTER PICTURES



Erected in a few seconds it hangs on wall or stands on its feet.

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EXCLUSIVE DESIGN

The "Lumaplak" Lightweight screen is entirely British made under Patent Nos. 493,789 and 505,673. It has been designed after much research and experimenting to fulfil the long felt demand for a reasonably priced screen of first class manufacture, and universal utility. The screen is finished in black and the fittings are chromium plated.

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Your nearest dealer's name and address, samples and new 6 page brochure describing the Lightweight and other screens up to 15ft. wide will be sent free upon application. **WRITE NOW!**
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WINTER SALE BARGAINS

9.5 mm. PROJECTORS		
£2 15 0	Pathe "Kid" for 30 ft. and 60 ft. films	£1 5 0
£7 0 0	Pathe "Imp" with motor and Super attachment	£4 10 0
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£9 17 6	Coronet with motor, latest type	£6 0 0
£9 17 6	Coronet as above, shop soiled only	£7 7 0
£11 0 0	Home Movie with motor	£3 0 0
£13 0 0	Home Movie with motor and super attachment	£7 0 0
£65 0 0	Pathe "Vox" Talkie, demonstration model	£55 0 0
9.5 mm. CAMERAS		
£3 15 0	Coronet complete with set of supplementary lenses, perfect condition	£2 10 0
£16 16 0	Pathe de Lux Motocamera, f/2.7 Krauss lens, powerful motor	£6 0 0
16 mm. PROJECTORS		
£18 10 0	Kodascope D., 300 watt lamp, case, perfect	£10 0 0
£25 0 0	Kodascope E., transformer, model, 300 watt lamp, case, shop soiled only	£20 0 0
17.5 mm. PROJECTORS		
£60 0 0	Pathe 17.5 mm. Talkie, with extra 60 mm. f/22 Pathex lens, transformer, sound trailer of "The King," perfect condition	£25 0 0
ACCESSORIES		
£1 14 0	Ensign Projector and Camera Stand, adjustable	£0 19 6
£1 2 0	Rigid Silver Screen, unused, 24 x 18	£0 15 6
£1 12 0	Rigid Silver Screen, unused, 32 x 24	£1 2 0

Also ample stocks of new silver screens with stretchers from 7/9, beaded screens from 30/-.
 7 days' Trial Approval against remittance. Liberal part-exchange allowances against new apparatus. Extensive 9.5mm. Film Library. All films in perfect condition.

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SIDCUP CINE SERVICE

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Running Commentary

(Continued from previous page)

most interesting to watch the dots in the three rings come to rest and move on again, successively, as the machine is speeded up through the range from 16 to 24 frames per second.

Of course, once the correct speed has been found, the viewing lamp need not be kept on as one can tell by sound if the speed varies. The simplest way to mount the disc for use is to paste it on to a piece of card, leaving under pressure to keep it flat, and then cut out and attach to projector spindle or handle by means of a piece of plasticine.

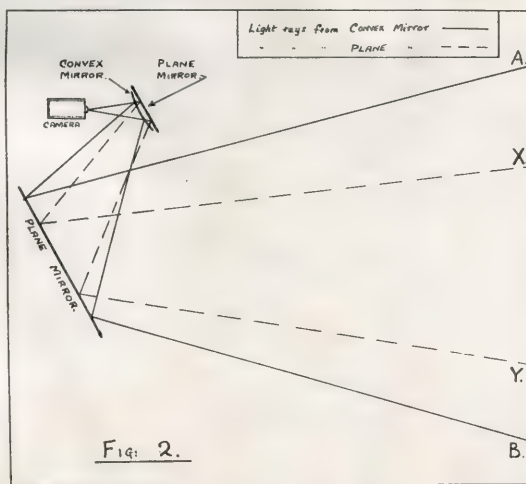
Some projectors have mechanisms giving only 7 pictures per revolution of the main spindle (e.g., the Home Movie Pathe) and for these the formula will be:—

$$\frac{700}{\text{frames per second}} = \text{number of dots}$$

and for the disc given in Fig. 1 the speeds will be 14, 17½ and 21 frames per second as the 50, 40 and 33 dots respectively come to rest.

* * *

Why Wheels Go 'Backward' Another—and usually most exasperating—stroboscopic effect often occurs in films of the rotation of such symmetrical objects as spoked wheels.



Clearly, if successive spokes exactly reach the positions previously occupied by their leading neighbours in successive film frames, then no movement of the spokes will appear to be taking place, though the rim of the wheel appears to be rotating normally (unless it also is built up of identical sectors, or unless it is so perfectly clean and uniform that there are no irregularities to illustrate its rotation).

Further, if successive spokes just fail to reach the positions previously occupied by their neighbours in successive frames, then the spokes will appear to be rotating backwards—but, in general, very slowly, and for this reason:—Suppose successive spokes traverse four-fifths of the inter-spoke distance between successive frames, then the appearance on the screen is that they have traversed one-fifth of the distance backwards. Hence,

the apparent backward rotation is one quarter of the actual forward rotation, and thus the appearance of quarter-speed backward rotation is given.

The reason why one's eye should incorrectly assume the one-fifth backwards movement instead of the actual four-fifths forward movement is a simple matter of cold logic as follows:—at the limiting speed, when the spokes seem to stand still, what are actually adjacent spokes are assumed to be the very same spoke in each frame: and this assumption naturally holds good when the wheel is revolved a shade slower . . . so backwards the spokes seem to go!

One is, of course, familiar with the breakdown point of this incorrect assumption, when, as the wheel revolves slower and slower, the spokes appear to go backwards faster and faster until there is a momentary blur and behold! they proceed forward.

Moral . . . film carriages head-on.

* * *

Controlled Distortion One knows distorting mirrors only too well! One has looked into the things at side-shows, and been slightly startled. But they are easily made—and with the refinement of variable, controlled distortion—by simply using a piece of highly-polished stainless steel sheet. A piece about a foot square, and 0.015 of an inch thick (= 28 S.W.G.) can be purchased for about three shillings. The metal is springy, and will not permanently distort when slightly bent.

If the sheet is bent about a vertical axis, the subject reflected in it looks tall and thin; if about a horizontal axis, short and stout. It is thus easy, by filming the reflection while the sheet is being slowly bent more and more, to show a person becoming thin or fat, at will. Try it on Cousin Madge, who is perturbed about her girth; or to illustrate the hospitable old slogan: "Pallid and thin I staggered in: Jolly and stout I gambolled out."

* * *

"Wide-Angle" An important use of the ordinary convex mirror, such as has its place

opposite the largest window of the drawing-room, is to enable "wide-angle" shots to be taken when no wide-angle lens is available: that is, when it is required to cover a large area and the "run-back" available for the camera is limited. The way in which these convex mirrors make the smallest sitting-room take on the appearance of a Hollywood-type lounge is, of course, precisely the effect that a wide-angle lens furnishes.

Hence the camera is set-up so as to include the mirror, and duly focussed for the background (focus distance = dist. from camera to mirror surface plus dist. from mirror to background) and the shot is ready for taking. Note that the mirror frame should be included, so the audience will know it is a mirror shot, because otherwise the fact that in reflection everything is reversed will puzzle them.

To get the wide-angle effect without admitting that a mirror was used, a double reversal must be contrived by filming in the convex mirror not the actual subject but the reflection of the subject in an ordinary plane mirror. The final image will then be the right way round, and if no parts of the mirror frames are shown, no one will ever know that the shot was made in this way.

The arrangement is shown in Fig. 2, and in practice presents no difficulty. Fig. 2 also illustrates the wide-angle effect obtained by the convex mirror; AB represents the amount of subject covered with it in use, whereas if a plane mirror were substituted the smaller amount XY only would be covered, everything else being equal.

Inexpensive Dimmer

It is definitely a great advantage to be able to dim the room lights before starting a reel of film, rather than abruptly switching off (and on); and a dimmer can very inexpensively be made as follows:—

First, consider a 100 watt lamp on 250 volt mains . . .

$$\text{Current consumed} = \frac{\text{watts}}{\text{volts}} = \frac{100}{250} = 0.4 \text{ amps.}$$

To find the resistance of the lamp, apply Ohm's Law:—
VOLTAGE=RESISTANCE multiplied by CURRENT.

$$\text{So in this case } 250 = \text{RESISTANCE} \times .4$$

$$\text{therefore, Resistance} = \frac{250}{.4} = 625 \text{ ohms.}$$

To halve the current applied, and so make the lamp burn dimly, we must double the resistance in the circuit; and we do this by connecting in series with the lamp an extra resistance of 625 ohms. This is done by winding suitable resistance wire round an insulator made of porcelain or bakelite or ebonite, etc. Suitable wire is:—

Nickel Chrome Oxidized Resistance wire,

NEW CINE SCREEN

Name. Cinepro De Luxe Batten Screens.
Makers or Agents. Cinepro, Ltd., 1, New Burlington Street, W.1.

Description. These screens are of the simple type in which the material is fixed to a roller at one end and to a flat wooden slat at the other and is held under tension by vertical strainer bars. But they nevertheless display several points of interest.

First of all, they are of entirely British material and manufacture, with the exception of the beads used in the bead screens. These are American in origin and are particularly fine and smoothly laid down. The silver surface which is available does not consist of the more usual American cloth, but is prepared by metallic spraying, with consequently improved dispersion of the accepted light rays. Both screen materials are waterproof, and even the bead screen may be immersed in water without suffering damage. The screen material is duck cloth.

Construction of these screens is first class. Good samples of wood are used, and they are well finished with rounded corners where desirable, well sanded and blacked. The roller is split in two halves, and the screen material is clamped between these and screwed. The vertical strainer arms have

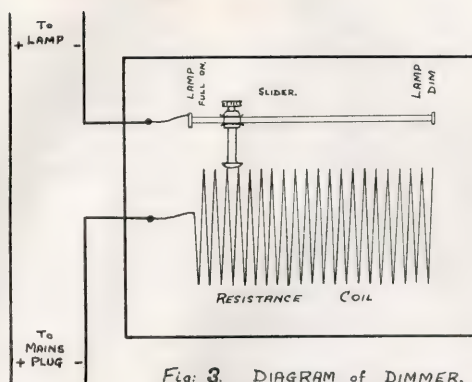


Fig. 3. DIAGRAM of DIMMER.

Gauge . . . 34 S.W.G. (= 0.009 in. diameter)
Resistance . . . 23 ohms per yard.

Approx. cost . . . one farthing per yard.

It is actually sold by weight.

The length we shall require for 625 ohms total resistance will be 625 divided by 23, which makes 27 yards. This length can easily be wound on to an insulator of diameter 1½ inches and length 3 inches. Note that Oxidized Nickel Chrome wire is specified, because with this material adjacent coils can touch without "shorting."

After winding, which can be done by hand but is really a lathe job, a slider must be arranged with a contact to slide along the coils, as shown diagrammatically in Fig. 3. The pressure of the contact is sufficient to make electrical connection with the coils in spite of the oxidized layer, which only protects against light contact. Alternatively, a stud-type rheostat control can be picked up cheaply secondhand from a wireless dealer, and tappings from the resistance coil taken to the studs.

The above electrical data can also be advantageously applied to the making of a "warming-up" resistance for the projector lamp, which, by preventing the usual surge of current when the lamp is switched on cold, considerably lengthens its life.

washers at their point of rotation and metal protection where they are clamped.

The screen is supported in use by transverse feet which rotate about their centres and fold flat when not in use. These are fitted with either rubber or felt feet, which are glued and screwed into position.

A duck bag, which is wet resisting, is included in the price of each screen—a commendable saving in cost.

Sizes and Prices. The range of sizes is in ten steps from 30" x 22" surface, to 10 feet wide. The former costs £1 10 6 in crystal bead, and 18s. in silver. The latter—£14 15 0 in crystal and £10 7 6 in silver. The popular 40" x 30" size costs £2 5 0 in crystal and £1 1 0 in silver.

General Remarks. One point of advantage which is claimed for them is that they are carefully backed with a special blue pigment paint which not only renders the screen more opaque, and therefore more efficient, but also tends to "clean up" any yellowish tendency in the incident light. Undoubtedly the screens do give a very real impression of whiteness.

We should like to see the manufacturers increase their range by including a good white surface as well as the crystal and silver. There are still many well informed cinematographers who prefer pure white screens.

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Specto, very powerful model for A.C./D.C., All black, latest gate. List £15 15 0	£12 17 6

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What the Societies are Doing

Bradford Cine Circle

(Hon. Sec.: A. C. Whitehead, The Towers, Clayton, Bradford).

This club now holds weekly meetings on Sunday afternoons at its headquarters: Cambridge House Annexe, Horton Lane, Bradford. "The most exciting news this month is the result of our annual competition for members' films." They were judged by the Editor of *Amateur Cine World*.

The syllabus for the next few weeks is as follows:—Feb. 4th: "The History of Cinematography" by P. N. Southorn. Feb. 11th: "For the New Member—Titling" by Thistlethwaite. Feb. 18th: "Films from the London A.F.C." Feb. 25th: "Members' Films." Mar. 4th: "Cartoon and Trick Work" by S. W. Bowler (Messrs. Gevaert Ltd.).

Catford Films

(Hon. Sec.: Mrs. V. W. Payne, 7, Station Buildings, Catford).

The newly formed mobile unit gave many shows at Xmas time to large crowds of evacuees, although fog made travelling about the country rather difficult. These shows were received with such enthusiasm that it is hoped to carry on with the good work over the New Year. If anyone is interested in this voluntary work and would like to help, Catford Films would be very pleased to hear from them. New equipment is being added systematically to this unit, and the film library now consists of fourteen good synchronised silent films, and four new feature sound films.

In the meantime, the society are carrying on with their monthly meetings, gathering members' reports, showing members' own films and new productions from other societies.

Hyde C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: G. Wain, 170, Dawson Road, Hyde, Cheshire).

A lecture on filters and colour processes was given by member S. Cooke on Dec. 8th and illustrated by his film, *Rhineland*—a pre-war effort! On Dec. 22nd a demonstration by E. Bridge, of his home-made 9/16mm. projector was enjoyed by the technical members. The machine, a remarkable achievement, was the result of six months' spare time work, and the picture thrown on the screen was equal to that of any manufactured projector with a similar wattage lamp.

Lyric Film Company

(Hon. Sec.: V. M. Kirby, 5, Clarence Road, Windsor).

While waiting for new members required before a new film can be discussed, the club has built a projection theatre complete with coloured lights, dimmer and organ. Suggestions for a "location ramble" have been submitted and are being arranged.

Recent screenings include *The End Justifies* (the club's first film), *Cinderella* and *The Glorious Sacrifice*. Would any clubs desirous of exchanging Pathe super reels please communicate with the Hon. Sec.

Reports and stills for the March issue of "Amateur Cine World" should reach us not later than January 29th.

North Birmingham A.C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: G. A. Hall, 6, Pereira Road, Harborne, Birmingham, 17).

Jan. 11th was "president's night" when four films from the Beckenham C.S. were screened. Future meetings will include: Feb. 8th two short lectures: "Facts about Cinematography" and "Titling," followed by a short film. March 9th, Screening of films entered for the society's competition, with judges' comments. April 4th, A selection of films from other societies.

Newport & District A.F.S.

(Hon. Sec.: R. G. Butterworth, 156, Caerleon Road, Newport, Mon.).

Ten members have guaranteed rent of the studio, a weekly subscription has been fixed instead of an annual one, and a working committee of five elected to conduct the activities of the society during the war. Two very successful guest nights have been held. Films were projected, and a variety of 'turns' given by members and friends; the dramatic section produced a comedy-drama and a farce.

The chairman, F. L. Stockwell, projected talking films when the society were the guests of the Cercle Francais de Newport recently. Rehearsals of the current production, *Cinderella of Dockland*, have been temporarily held up owing to members being on national service, but parts have been freshly cast, and real progress is being made.

Planet A.F.S.

(Hon. Sec.: H. Roger Dale, 72, Wellington Road, Bush Hill Park, Enfield, Middx. Meetings: Every Monday evening at the studio, 85, Green Lanes, Palmers Green, N.13).

During the recent annual film show so many requests from new members and visitors were received for a revival of *Refuge* that although many thousands have now seen this film, it will be screened again on January 28th, 29th and 30th at the studio. Stoke-on-Trent A.C.S. have promised to send *It Never Rains*, so that there will be two of the *Amateur Cine World* "Ten Best Films of 1938" in the same programme. There will be one or two supporting films and the programme will commence at 8.15 p.m. nightly.

Any readers will be welcome; there will be a nominal charge of sixpence to cover expenses. Intending visitors should note that the premises are some 100 yards south of the North Circular Road crossing, that buses 29, 629, 641 and 625 pass the door, and that the entrance is at the rear in the mews, which connects Kelvin and Melbourne Avenues.

By the time these notes are published it is expected that schemes for future production will be well in hand, although they will be less ambitious than in previous years. Societies wishing to hire Planet films should note that Mr. Best is no longer attending to this matter, and pending the appointment of a new official (address next month) enquiries should be sent to Hugh Baddeley, 84, Powys Lane, Palmers Green, N.13.

It is interesting to note that since Miss Moya McQueen Pope's (*Five Men Were Hungry* feminine lead) success in the touring version of *While Parents Sleep* at the Coliseum and other theatres, Gordon Sidery Smith, who played opposite her in Planet's 'horror' film, has just completed ten days' work on the set with Arthur Askey and Richard Murdoch for *Charley's (Big Hearted) Aunt*.

Regal A.C.S., Derby

(Hon. Sec.: R. Wain, 31, Moore Street, Derby).

This club has actually extended its activities since the war. During the summer months members made many improvements to the club's projection theatre; it has now been practically doubled in size, has improved seating for 40 to 50 people, and a large and well-equipped projection box has been constructed. This is fitted with twin-turntables, amplifier and mike, remote control for the proscenium curtains, adjustable projection benches and plate glass ports for viewing and projecting.

The club had to suspend production on their summer film, *Regal Antics*, since the principal actors had joined the Forces, but was able to complete the major portion of the film, which had its premiere recently at the studio. At this the gaps were bridged by a running commentary via the microphone, and the production was extremely well received.

Shows are being given every Sunday evening at the studio, at which about half of the films are library stock and half of efforts of members and friends. Efforts are made to include each week at least one colour film. New members and visitors from other clubs would be welcomed.

Stoke-on-Trent A.C.S.

(Hon. Sec.: H. T. Morfe, 51, Beresford Crescent, Newcastle, Staffs.).

Weekly meetings have now been resumed and attendances are very good. Dense fog prevented the club seeing the "Ten Best" programme at Manchester, but part of it is being arranged for January 24.

Dr. and Mrs. G. R. Hind recently showed their films of a holiday in Yorkshire—a most enjoyable evening. The club has also seen some films taken by Sir Harold Gillies during a fishing expedition in Iceland. Filmed in Kodachrome, they depict a country and life rarely seen on the amateur screen. On the same night the president and his wife—Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Day—screened a typical Day effort, well up to their usual high standard. But the honour of the evening went to Mr. Bowyer with his Kodachrome *Two Hours to Wait*. This is his first serious attempt and by it he shows himself as by no means the least accomplished of members.

Sale & Stretford F.S.

(President: G. England, 38, Sandford Road, Sale Moor, Cheshire).

Members who were present at the presentation of the *Amateur Cine World* "Ten Best" films spent an enjoyable afternoon. Unfortunately, they had to leave before the screening of *Refuge*, but hope that the Planet will loan them a copy.

Mr. Jeffrey, of the Salford C.S., and two of his colleagues recently gave a very interesting show of their own productions. The society has not yet been successful in securing new premises, but the search continues.

United Film Productions

(Acting Sec.: J. S. W. Searle-Shirley, 13, St. Ives House, Darvall Square, S.W.18).

In Production: 16mm. S.O.D. (33 rev.), film of the seasons as seen through the eyes of a cottager on the side of a London common.

U.F.P. held a gala re-opening night on Dec. 16th in their newly constructed theatre at Barnes. The programme consisted of sound and silent films from Blackheath Film Unit, Kingston C.C., Planet A.C.S., Wandsworth Tech. Kine Foto Group, and, of course, some of their own shorts. 34 people were present, among them members of Argosy Films and other societies who loaned films.

Owing to the fact that one of the films on the printed programme did not arrive until almost a week after the show, the *Three Cuckoo Clocks*, a U.F.A. production, was substituted, to which the club's sound expert gave a very good extempore musical background. Considerable interest was displayed in the sub-professional disc-recording apparatus, which is geared for 33, 78 and 80 r.p.m.

The next monthly projection evening will be held on January 20th and the secretary will be pleased to hear from any society who can offer the loan of either 9.5mm., 16mm., silent S.O.D. or S.O.F. New members are urgently wanted.

West Kent C.C.

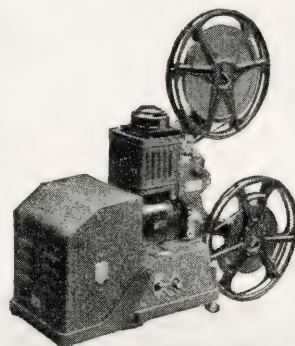
(Hon. Sec.: A. C. Castle, Newstead, Bradbourne Park Road, Sevenoaks, Kent).

The club has evolved a scheme which enables it to keep going under very pleasant conditions. "We no longer have a fixed date and place of meeting, but instead meet at intervals of about six weeks at the homes of three members who have kindly placed accommodation at our disposal. The meetings will in future alternate between the three houses and thus save payment of rent."

"Now with no financial obligations we have been able to suspend subscriptions. Infrequent meetings and the pooling of cars was our solution to the transport problem. Our membership has, of course, been depleted, but we intend to carry on until, like the little nigger boys, 'there was none.'"

There have been two war-time meetings so far. At the first a member's film, *The Scrap Book*, was shown (8mm. Kodachrome). The camera was used with obvious care and the colour was excellent. At the second meeting the chairman showed in his own theatre some of his films which had achieved distinction. The meeting was one of the most successful in the club's history. The next meeting will be held on Feb. 5th.

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Test Reports of New

Apparatus

TITLE BENCH

Name. Cinepro Universal Titler.
Makers and Agents. Cinepro, Ltd.,
1, New Burlington Street, London, W.1.

General Description. This instrument and its accessories are entirely British. They were conceived and designed by a prominent member of the staff of Cinepro Ltd., after considerable experience of the needs of the amateur title maker.

The instrument proper consists of a title frame with 9" x 12" working surface fitted to one end of a base, which also supports a camera carriage. The base is of telescopic form, each half consisting of three parallel tubes on the same horizontal plane, the outer pair being of larger diameter than the inner one, and one set of tubes being of such diameter that they slide within the other set. In this way the total length of the instrument can be varied in such manner that the camera and the title board can be kept at the extremities of the set-up, whatever the conditions of working. Practical title makers will immediately realise the great practical advantage of

The upper part of the carriage rests on a small car or platform of inverted flat box form, which carries two transverse spindles. At the extremities of these spindles are the wheels or rollers on which the whole carriage runs. These rollers are concave and engage exactly with the external pair of tubes of the base.

Carriage Tightly Locked

A central vertical spindle, which drops down from the underside of the carriage, carries another transverse horizontal spindle and a pair of similar rollers, which run on the undersides of the external tubes and when the knurled head control screw (above referred to) is tightened up, it locks the whole carriage sufficiently tightly to prevent any but deliberate movement of it. A trucking shot, or moving the camera for some other purpose, can easily be accomplished by slightly loosening the control screw.

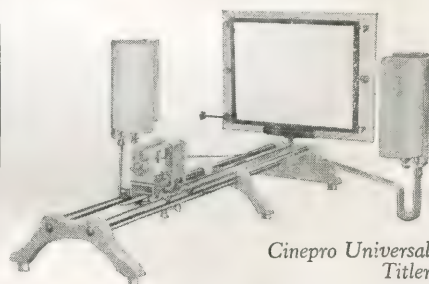
The carriage also carries an adjustable fence or gauge which rests against the side of the camera and thus ensures that the axis of its taking lens is truly perpendicular and central in relation to the surface of the title.

The title easel is illuminated by two lamp units which consist of semi-cylindrical hood-reflectors and lamp holders which are supported at the extremities of radial arms moving about centres at either side of the pair of feet immediately adjacent to the title frame. It is thus possible (a) to illuminate the title evenly from any angle at the front, (b) to produce unbalanced lighting at will, (c) to illuminate translucent or silhouette title subjects from the back.

Centring

The whole of the title-frame assembly is supported on a single vertical spindle, which is free to rise and fall, and can be locked at any desired height. The frame proper is carried in a shoe of square section connected rigidly to the vertical spindle. The frame can move laterally in the shoe and be locked where desired. These two movements thus entirely cover the requirements of centring, and when this movement has been accomplished, the frame is locked in an absolutely rigid relationship to the axis of the camera lens.

The frame is used with either of its two sides facing the lens, according to requirements. One face is fitted with three pairs of spring clips, these being positioned equidistantly down the vertical sides of the frame. These clips form bearings for various attachments which can be placed within the frame. For example, a flat felt board which is supplied for the setting up of felt-letter titles, can have pegs fitted to its four outer corners, and is then held fast in the correct plane of focus by the four outer clips. If one pair only of pegs is fitted to the title board either at its upper or lower corners, or at points opposite its centre, the board will then be free to rotate around the pegs at these points and will give appropriate effect titles. The makers also supply as



Cinepro Universal
Titler

this arrangement, which is one of the outstanding features of the Titler.

The base is in its turn supported on three pairs of splayed feet, those at the front and back being rigidly fixed to the tubes. The centre pair are free to slide along them, but can be locked at any desired point by means of thumb screws.

The larger of the central tubes of the base has a window cut in it through which the user may observe a series of numbers which are engraved on the smaller centre tube. A chart of code numbers is supplied, corresponding to different makes of cameras and different focal lengths of lenses in these. Reference to this chart enables the user instantly to select the correct extension for his purpose, and the instrument can then be locked to this extension for as long as desired. The system can be used, in conjunction with the rolling camera carriage which is supplied, to give stop motion trucking shots on titles, and provides a range of movement equal to the total length of the titling bench.

The camera carriage also strikes a new note inasmuch as it is supported on "wheels." The carriage proper is a heavy gauge metal pressing of square tubular form, the solid faces being fore and aft, with large open sides giving very free access to the camera clamping screw and the knurled head screw which controls the carriage itself. The upper face of the carriage is amply large to carry any sub-standard cine camera.

additional accessories a large cylindrical drum and an octagonal drum of similar size, on which revolving titles can be set up.

If the titling frame is turned the other way round it becomes possible to use another set of accessories. Reversal of the position of the frame is necessary to bring the working surface into the correct plane of focus. The new accessories have their own clips and consist of two pairs of rollers, one pair to be clipped on the top and bottom sides of the frame and the other two on the opposing vertical sides. The former pair are as wide as the frame, are free to revolve in bearings, and carry a roll of paper the full width of the title frame. Very lengthy titles written on the roll, can be caused to climb upwards during the camera exposure (or be made to drop downwards if desired, though this is not usual). The other pair carry a roll of comparatively narrow paper, and can be used to cause lettering to move across the screen.

The outfit also includes plain and opal

glass plates, a selection of coloured title cards, a camera centralising card and a "continuous" type of stencilling outfit with pen, ink and black paper.

Price. Complete outfit as described, £6 17 6.

General Remarks. We are pleased indeed to welcome this example of British enterprise. It is an interesting fact that it is in the titling field that British designers have done most for the amateur cinematographer. It is obvious to the experienced eye that here we have the result of intelligent observation of the expressed needs of titling amateurs, and we should also like to congratulate the makers on the excellent presentation and finish of the instrument, which we regret to say is not a general characteristic of British apparatus.

We should also like to pay a tribute to the author of one phrase in the pamphlet advertising the Titler. "Good films *deserve* good titles—indifferent films *need* them."

The Problem of Russia

(Continued from page 478)

but that it is useless to put up a fight, and that suicide is about the best way out.

The glaring faults of *Professor Mamlock* and most of the Russian film output arises out of the prevailing Russian literary conception of the film as a medium. In pre-revolutionary days it was necessary for them to adopt the printed word as a method of "exposure" for the building up of a body of support for the change-over from Czarism. Once this change-over has been achieved and the new regime established, the old method still goes on, to become a fetter upon progress, because "exposure" remains a fixed habit, a reflex action, an end in itself.

The writer usually expresses what he as an individual feels about what he exposes, and presumably feels the better for getting it off his chest. The film medium, however, is able to depict reality directly to large groups of people. It is far more highly charged. It eliminates the go-between—the word. It makes absolutely imperative the abandonment of the outlook of the individual writer-craftsman.

The producer, the director, the scenarist must become less word-conscious and more and more reality-conscious; they must understand what a film does to people. They must understand that the living, moving, speaking picture affects the audience by its living, moving, speaking example. Whether he knows it or not, the film maker is an educationist.

If he makes a character say: "Go on, go on shooting women, old men and children," and leaves it at that, without placing a positive, balancing factor into the picture, then the suggestion remains with the audience to condition their future behaviour, and the attack on Finland should occasion no surprise. If he shows his audience that it is hardly any use struggling against the unbelievably malevolent and supposedly all-powerful Nazis, the logical result is made apparent that the best thing to do is to make friends with the Nazis for fear of what they may do to you.

When one thinks of 500 copies of *Professor Mamlock*, and that each copy may be projected at ten to twenty Russian cinemas, and when it is realised that *Mamlock* is only

the culminating example of a long succession of Russian films in which the Soviet hero nearly always ends the film by dying at the hands of an enemy, it is scarcely surprising that Litvinov's foreign policy (of collective security and that "peace is indivisible") is thrown overboard.

'The Killing Business'

Obviously—what is the use of being socially minded if the Soviet hero, in film after film, gets it in the neck for his pains, and his murderer always gets away with it? The conviction gradually strengthens over the years that it is best to look after number one first, and the rest of the world can go hang. Finally, the Russians go into the killing business themselves in order to survive against an enemy whose power they have themselves magnified and distorted by this crazy auto-suggestion.

To show how deep and how far back the literary tradition goes in Soviet film production, readers may recall how *Mother*, made in 1926 by Pudovkin, ends. The mother is carrying the red flag at the head of an anti-Czarist procession in 1905. The Mother, who from the beginning of time, has always been the living, sweet embodiment of all that is good in life, the Mother who by her nature assures the perpetual renewal of life—is charged by the Cossacks and is trampled to death in the mud. This visual, concrete reality leaves its indelible impression upon the minds of the audience.

'Intellectualism Run Riot'

The Mother dies, but the symbolic abstraction, the red flag on a pole, dissolves from the clutch of the dead woman and fades in again (presumably years later) fluttering gloriously upon the towers of the Kremlin. Thus, the negative aspect, the death, is given the greatest emphasis in this living form, when it might well have remained relatively harmless had it been left in Gorky's book, from where it was taken. The sentient, throbbing, living being—the Mother—dies, but the dead thing—the flag—lives. This, truly, is intellectualism run riot. Here, indeed, do we see the first faint outlines of the projected

(Continued on next page)

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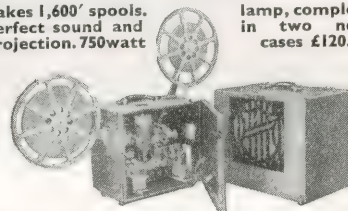
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The Problem of Russia

(Continued from previous page)

attack upon sentient, decent, living human beings in Finland.

The hero, Matushenko in *Potemkin*, dies. Mustapha, the boy hero in *The Road to Life*, dies, the Communist hero in *Two Days* dies, the heroic *Twenty-six Commissars* die, the Communards in *The New Babylon* die, the Red Sailors in *We From Kronstadt* are executed by the Whites, the Red partisan leader in *Storm Over Asia* dies, and in *Chapaiev*, one of the most widely shown films in Russia and one that Stalin is reputed to have seen six times, the Red troupe are caught asleep at their posts and are massacred by the Whites, and Chapaiev himself is machine-gunned and is drowned as the film ends.

Imagine how far deep into the mire of self-pitying romanticism the social consciousness has been allowed to descend, when it can relive an episode in its history which any other community would rather have forgotten in shame—to be shown caught asleep at their posts and massacred by the enemy. Imagine the effect upon the Russian population when told that their head of State had given social sanction to this film by being drawn in fascination to see it six times.

A society that could produce and admire *Chapaiev* and *Professor Mamlock* could surely do no other than go 'haywire' in the international field, throw away the respect of liberal-minded people all over the world as if it were a worthless rag, and go in for killing and destruction in a sweat of self-induced fear.

'Socially Inspired'

We in England must avoid the mistakes made by the pre-Nazi Germans and the Russians. It is profoundly encouraging to notice that a few salient films lately produced had become more objective, more active, more socially inspired, that is to say, more reality-conscious and less Central European. Films like *Q-Planes* and *Shipyard Sally* were already breaking through the ground a few months before the war. In both these films we have social unity in action in face of problems affecting the lives of our people.

We had *The Lambeth Walk*, whose hearty qualities can hardly be over-praised, and now the peak of these with the M-G-M *Goodbye Mr. Chips*. The casting of good types, no affectation of manner or speech, the supreme

team work of the cast and technical staff, the dignity and the perfection of the acting of the whole cast led by Robert Donat, and, above all, the deep social feeling that permeates the picture, all go towards a production that will make the name of our people respected abroad.

Unfortunately, less well considered films are being contemplated for production, among them one that is announced by British National Films, to be directed by Brian Desmond Hurst. Starting with an excellent idea, what are the main features of the picture as the director expects them to be? Although the film is to be called *Freedom Radio*, the limelight is apparently to be centred, not upon the men behind the *Freedom Radio*, but upon an etherealised and highly romanticised character called "The Leader."

Come now, Mr. Hurst! Adolf Hitler may be a Fuehrer to a lot of de-humanised Nazis, but he is surely no "Leader" to us, and to put such an idea into the dangerous film medium is to play right into the hands of the enemy.

According to reports, we are to have not only Hitler, but the whole menagerie in the shape of Goebbels, Goering, Himmler. There will be the "leader's favourite actress" and a throat specialist. The men whose cause is being championed at *Freedom Radio* are not mentioned. Hitler's voice and his sinister personality will pervade the film—but Hitler will not be seen.

Mr. Hurst says: "We want to show by implication that he (Hitler) is a Satanic figure." Can it be imagined why he should employ our own people, for good English money, in an English film, to portray the enemy in this manner?

If it is only a man at the head of men whom we are fighting, we can defeat him, but if this man is deified into a Satanic God whose mystical presence is all-pervasive and whose body is intangible, what kind of an objective are you setting us? How, where and when are we to defeat this enemy?

Let's be sensible. Let us not fall into the habit of looking at this job through the eyes of that classic metaphysician who has been likened to "a blind man, in a dark room, looking for a black cat which isn't there."

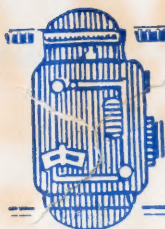
Let us not get ourselves into the same kind of stew in which the Russians have landed, shivering at their own self-created Satanic bogies, their paralytic *Chapaiev's* and their suicidal *Professor Mamlock's*.

This Titling Business

(Continued from page 472)

in their place. It is essentially an informal alphabet and as such is best used in unconventional ways; interjections and exclamations are two obvious uses, while particular names, recurring phrases and so on can often be emphasised with its use. The letters do not demand to be truly upright—the vertical in many of them would, in fact, be most difficult to determine—while as the final line, "ONE WILD NIGHT," shows, they are still quite happy out of line, on the skew or in almost any position short of literally upside down!

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